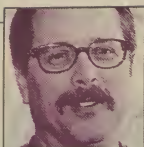


Winning at the ballot box
Lots of gay and lesbian candidates
across the country won on Election Day.
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Enough is enough
UCSF researchers say gays
need more prevention funds.
page 12



Music to our ears
Melissa Ferrick, Cher,
Laurie Anderson, & more.
see Arts section



BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 30 • No. 46 • 16 November 2000

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Sf to set example for state's new drug reform law

by Katie Szymanski

Every state official who stands to benefit from the prison industry through its massive web of campaign contributions has come out against California's new drug reform policy – Proposition 36 – with criticisms ranging from prosecutors' claims that "the threat of jail keeps people in treatment" to California's Democratic senior senator stating that the measure "decriminalizes drugs."

When the smoky rhetoric clears, however, there will be little left to do but implement the ballot initiative-turned-law, which voters last week passed overwhelmingly by 61 percent, according to unofficial returns. Proposition 36 means that thousands of people convicted of simple drug possession – often sentenced to life prison terms, thanks to the state's archaic "three strikes" law – will not go to jail but instead enter treatment, where they may actually stand a chance of getting clean and rebuilding their lives. California currently imprisons more drug users than any other state; convicts, of course, are disproportionately poor; the dot-com junkie and other drug users of privilege are rarely targeted for arrest.

The statewide law goes into effect July 1, 2001, specifically dictating that the \$120 million allocated for treatment should not replace existing rehabilitation programs. The new policy will not have much effect on San Francisco, which already diverts many drug offenders to treatment, and likewise may have trouble in more conservative counties not used to treating offenders like people.

Yet San Francisco District Attorney Terence Hallinan hopes that the city will become, as it often is, an example for others to follow. Hallinan's office, in conjunction with San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey, the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, and the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic, is holding a community conference on Wednesday, November 29, to discuss implementation of Proposition 36.

"While everybody else is still trying to figure out what it all means, we're already organizing, so that we can take off as the model city," Hallinan told the *Bay Area Reporter*, noting that San Francisco had the highest approval rating for the measure

page 17 ►

Presidential race hangs in balance

by Cynthia Laird

More than one week after the closest presidential race in history, the country awaits word as to whether Al Gore or George W. Bush wins Florida's 25 electoral votes and the White House.

Legal wrangling has been taking place since last Wednesday, and the latest official Florida vote tally has Bush leading by a razor-thin margin of 300 votes. Absentee ballots from Floridians living overseas are due this Friday, and the status of at least two hand recounts is uncertain. Republican Secretary of State Katherine Harris, who campaigned for Bush earlier this year, stuck to the Tuesday deadline for the 67 counties to certify votes, even though a judge who ruled in favor of the deadline left her leeway to accept late totals from counties going forward with manual recounts.

Early Wednesday, Harris sought an emergency petition from the Florida Supreme Court to halt the recounts.

In Palm Beach County, tension was high last weekend as election workers finished a hand count of 1 percent of the ballots cast,

page 13 ►



Protesters took to the streets in downtown San Francisco last Saturday in support of Al Gore and calling for a revote in Palm Beach County, Florida. The presidential race remained undecided as of Wednesday.

The spirit of Raymond Burr is alive and well at Healdsburg vineyard

by Ed Walsh

Robert Benevides's partner of 35 years was dying.

"He was probably a fifth of his body weight," said Benevides. "He was down to nothing. He didn't look like Raymond at all."

"When he was dying I held onto his hand. And I told the doctor 'I think we've lost him.'"

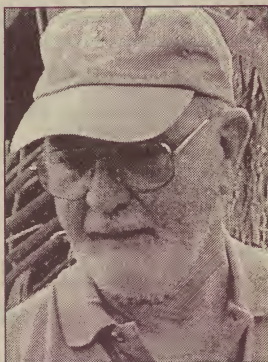
He was simply "Raymond" to Benevides but to the rest of the world he was someone else.

He was Perry Mason. He was Ironsides. He was TV legend Raymond Burr, the most recognizable celebrity in the world.

Seven years after Burr's death from cancer, Benevides is struggling to keep Burr's spirit of kindness and generosity alive in the Sonoma County vineyard where he lived with Burr for the last 13 years of Burr's life. Benevides is counting on a new business strategy to help him preserve the vineyard as a lasting legacy to his longtime partner. Last month, he opened a tasting room at the Raymond Burr Vineyards and is now selling wines directly to the public.

"I wasn't making it wholesale," the affable Benevides told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "The margins are so small that I couldn't make it. So I decided to go out on a limb."

Benevides bought the Healdsburg property where the vineyard stands in 1976. He convinced Burr to move there with him in 1980. They later sold the island they bought and managed in Fiji and moved their orchid



Robert Benevides at the Raymond Burr Vineyards.

nursery to the 40-acre undeveloped property. Burr cleared the land and installed a vineyard. Grapes were first planted in 1986. Four years later, the south-facing vineyard at the foot of Bradford Mountain produced its first vintage.

After Burr's death, and after much struggle and thought, Benevides decided to name the vineyard after Burr, as a tribute to his living spirit. Burr had been against the vineyard being named for him. Because Benevides is of Portuguese descent, Burr wanted to name

the vineyard the Portuguese words for "vineyard of two friends" but the name was already taken.

"I decided to name it Raymond Burr Vineyards," said Benevides. "He was so self-effacing in that kind of way. He would never have allowed it to be called that. It just seemed like the logical thing to do at the time. I'm not sorry I did that."

After Burr's death, it was reported that Benevides inherited a vast fortune from Burr. Benevides told the *B.A.R.* the truth was very different.

"He died insolvent," said Benevides. "He died owing the government a half million dollars. There was an article in a German paper that said I had inherited \$55 million. That was the biggest amount. A lot of papers had me inheriting all kinds of stuff. But I inherited nothing because he did not have any-

thing to leave. In fact, everything he owned we had to sell.

"At the end of his life he was very upset because of the hole he was leaving me in because there was a big mortgage on this house and there still is," added Benevides in an interview conducted in the home where he lived with Burr until his death in 1993. "He never thought of buying stocks or those kinds of things. Investments never crossed his mind. His investment was in people. He told me in the last month of his life, you will never be able to hold on. At the time I didn't know how big the encumbrances were."

Burr was well known for his generosity and philanthropy. Benevides said Burr strongly adhered to something Errol Flynn

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Gay veterans march



RICK GARDNER

Veteran George Gomez carries the colors to lead the Alexander Hamilton Post 448 of the American Legion in the city's annual Veterans Day Parade Sunday, November 12. About 25 members of Post 448 marched in the contingent, which also included a small float.

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Airlines go at it again

Appeal against SF's equal benefits law

by Katie Szymanski

The Air Transport Association and S.D. Myers Inc., a business represented by the anti-gay Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice, sought to have San Francisco's landmark equal benefits ordinance overturned on appeal as arguments were heard in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco Tuesday, November 14.

The ATA, which includes virtually every major passenger airline among its members, and S.D. Myers argued that the city's law that requires companies doing business with San Francisco to offer benefits to domestic partners of employees if those benefits are offered to employees' spouses violated federal law and encouraged immorality.

"This is a critical issue that focuses on a cultural shift under way in corporate America that is designed to legitimize same-sex relationships," said a statement from Robertson's ACLJ, which has successfully challenged domestic partnership laws around the country.

The airline group also argued that imposing local laws upon interstate commerce would nega-

tively impact business, a view that the judges evidently had a hard time believing. Chief Assistant City Attorney Dennis Aftergut argued the opposite, that employee morale and productivity would actually increase if diversity were recognized.

"This is a broad law with which 3,000 other companies are complying," Aftergut told the court.

The appeal was heard before a three-judge panel in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San

Francisco, and stemmed from a case whereby an airline contractor was denied city business because it did not conform to the ordinance. A U.S. District Court judge sided with San Francisco last year in upholding the ordinance; it is not yet known when the federal court of appeals decision will be issued.

The nation's largest airline, United, which filed a lawsuit of its own against the city, only to back off and implement the law after it lost in court, is a member of the ATA. ▼

ACT UP/SF trials begin, end

by Katie Szymanski

The AIDS dissident group ACT UP/San Francisco was recently dealt two blows: a court decision barring its members from the vicinity of the AIDS service organization Project Inform, and the beginning of a criminal trial for spraying Silly String on Department of Public Health Director Dr. Mitchell Katz.

San Francisco Superior Court Judge Ina Levin Gyemant last week granted a permanent injunction

against five members of ACT UP/SF for their alleged actions at an HIV treatment forum in April that resulted in the injury of Project Inform's Judy Leahy. Testimony from the plaintiffs during this civil trial indicated that members of ACT UP/SF barged into the forum and threw hard pills at the crowd; Leahy was injured when she was allegedly pushed out of the way by ACT UP member David Pasquarelli, a charge he denies. ACT UP denounced the injunction, saying it was granted due to false testimony by Project Inform. But Judge Gyemant's ruling seems to indicate that past incidences—like the infamous 1996 Kitty litter dumping on the head of San Francisco AIDS Foundation Executive Director Pat Christen—played a large role in her decision to prohibit ACT UP from coming within 100 yards of Project Inform employees.

Meanwhile, a few blocks away, jury selection began on Monday, November 13 for the Silly String attack against Katz that occurred in July when the DPH director was offering an explanation for his department's inaccurate HIV information. ACT UP members face criminal charges for assault for their role in the colorful explosion. ▼

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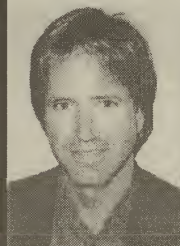
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Correction

In the article "Touched by Rabbi Angel" in the November 9 issue, it was reported that Rabbi Camille Shira Angel, the new rabbi of San Francisco's Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, had "not yet officiated at any same-sex marriage ceremonies." In fact, Rabbi Angel has officiated at same-sex marriage ceremonies. The article should have specified that she had not yet done so as rabbi for Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

The Bay Area Reporter regrets the error. ▼

COMMUNITY NEWS

Daly's advantage in District 6

by Terry Beswick

At first glance, the runoff election between Chris Daly and Chris Dittenhafer might not appear to be a close race.

Housing activist Daly received twice as many votes as Dittenhafer in the November 7 election for supervisor in San Francisco's District 6, with 5,757 votes, or 32.19 percent of the total votes cast.

Just three other candidates of the 17 on the ballot broke the 2,000 mark. Dittenhafer made it into the December 12 runoff with just 2,804 votes (15.68 percent), edging out former Supervisor Carol Ruth Silver, with 2,548 votes, and Beryl Magilavy, with 2,088 votes.

But this race is about more than two candidates — it's about development interests versus slow-growth neighborhood activists.

Despite his distant second showing, Dittenhafer is considered a contender for the seat. He is backed by Mayor Willie Brown, who led the opposition to the slow-growth ballot Proposition L, which at press time seemed headed for a narrow defeat.

With the balance of power on the board likely to tip away from the mayor, who previously could count on a majority of six votes from the supervisors on most issues, the makeup of the board after the December runoffs holds the key for both sides on the housing displacement issue that has dominated the supervisory races.

In addition to the mayor, Dittenhafer, who is openly gay, has endorsements from Assemblywoman Carole Migden, Supervisors Leslie Katz, Barbara Kaufman, Michael Yaki, and Mabel Teng. He has also received support from the Alice B. Toklas Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club, the San Francisco Police Officer's Association, the RFL Democratic Club, and other groups.

"When you include the soft money," Daly said, "we have a lot less."

But Daly, who is endorsed by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, said that it was through his "years and years of work that we were able to differentiate between myself and the other candidates," and expressed confidence that his campaign would prevail in the runoff.

"Maybe we'll have half as many mailers go out," Daly told the *Bay Area Reporter* Tuesday, November 14, "but in the general [election] we proved that we can do a lot more with less. I think if we do the



Chris Daly, left, and Chris Dittenhafer square off in a December 12 runoff for District 6 supervisor.

work we need to do we'll have a victory in four weeks."

If Daly is right, and he wins the popular vote, he plans to work with his colleagues on the board to implement Proposition L legislatively.

"I think that's sort of the better way to do it," said Daly. "We put it on the ballot almost out of desperation."

Dittenhafer, a Wells Fargo Bank branch manager and former taxi commissioner who supported the mayor's Proposition K and opposed Proposition L, has been weighed down from the outset with the "carpetbagger" image with which he entered the race.

After Katz suddenly announced that she was not running for re-election because she could not financially afford to move into District 6 merely to avoid a losing battle against Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano in her home district, Dittenhafer immediately filed his candidacy papers, and he and his partner moved into the district.

"Chris Dittenhafer is supported by the mayor, and when he was asked why he was running, he said it was because the mayor asked him to," said Daly. "This district needs representation on the board."

But Dittenhafer seems to have only worsened his image in some quarters of the diverse district that includes the Tenderloin, part of Hayes Valley, South of Market, the northern Mission, and Treasure Island, coming under criticism for being inaccessible and failing to show up at candidate's forums.

Pat Murphy, publisher of the online newsletter *district6sentinel.org* — which endorsed Daly — poked fun at Dittenhafer for recently failing to show up for a recent candidates' forum on homelessness. Murphy compared Dittenhafer's alternate plan for the evening to a Boy Scout hazing tradition called a "snipe hunt," in

which older boys trick new recruits on their first overnight campout into hunting for fictitious "snipes" in the woods.

"Rookie candidate Chris Dittenhafer had the same look about him October 26, smiling wide-eyed among city workers, poking around trash cans with flashlights, appearing to count homeless people," as part of a citywide count organized by the mayor, according to Murphy. "The flashlight photo-op was meant to give Dittenhafer political cover, for avoiding a District 6 candidates forum convened to address only housing issues held the same night."

Dittenhafer, who was profiled in the October 5 *Bay Area Reporter*, did not respond to calls seeking comment.

"I've made it a point to go to everything I possibly could," Daly said. "I enjoy talking to people."

Prior to the general election, Daly had won the unanimous endorsement of the San Francisco Tenants' Union and since then, he has secured endorsements from Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano, who had supported Magilavy, as well as enthusiastic support from Supervisors Gavin Newsom and Sue Bierman, and from former Supervisors Harry Britt, Angela Alioto, and John Bards.

Progressive activists Hank Wilson and Joan Roughgarden, former competitors for the District 6 seat, have also come around to Daly's side.

Looking ahead, Daly said that he is looking for more than a win for his campaign on December 12. He is looking to advance an agenda (see www.chrisdaly.org).

"We'll see how many independents make it to the board," he said, asked whether he is concerned that San Francisco may be seeing more mayoral vetoes than it has of late. "Hopefully, we'll have six. We'll see." ▼

photos by Rick Genharter

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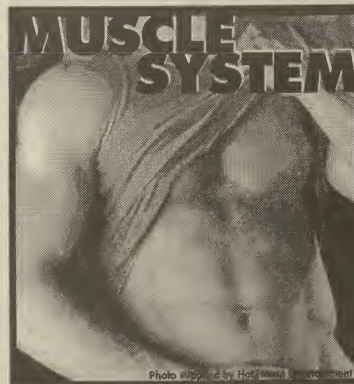
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Rough ride

by Jane Warner

1 8th and Church, November 11, 1:45 a.m.: A cabby picked up a man at the corner of Market and Sanchez. When they passed Dolores Park, the man displayed a seven inch knife and held it to the cabby's throat, telling him, "Give me all your money. If I have to use it, I will."

The cabby pulled over at Church and 18th and gave the suspect \$200 in mixed bills. The robber also took the keys to the car and the driver's taxi medallion and ran eastbound on 18th toward Dolores. The cab driver had a spare key, however, and started to follow the thief. The suspect realized the cabby was trailing him and ran into Dolores Park where the driver lost sight of him.

The robber is described as a white male, 19-21 years old, 5 feet tall, 135 pounds, with blond hair and blue eyes, wearing a white baseball cap, black jacket, and blue jeans.

Whipped, creamed

18th and Castro, November 10, 1 p.m.: Two women, who were reading the outside menu to a restaurant on 18th Street, were approached by a strange man who

asked if they wanted to have sex. The women tried to ignore him, but the man persisted, saying, "You don't want to have sex with me because you're going to have sex with each other." Incensed at his comment, one of the women who was drinking coffee at the time threw her beverage at the harasser's crotch. The harasser punched her in the nose.



Described as African American, 35-40 years old, 5 feet 8 inches tall, 160 pounds, wearing a dark jacket, blue jeans, and a red, white, and blue beanie cap, the suspect took off running eastbound on 18th. The women gave chase, but lost him in the area of Market and Noe. The injured woman was taken by ambulance to Davies Medical Center where she was treated for a bleeding cut to the bridge of her nose.

Tipsy

Noah's Bagels, 410 Castro, November 10, 11:12 a.m.

A clerk at Noah's noticed the tip jar missing and a man hurrying out the door. The employee gave chase and as she turned the corner at Harvey Milk Plaza, she saw the suspect stuffing the tip jar into a blue bag. The clerk ran after the suspect south on Collingwood and caught him as they ap-

proached 18th and Castro. The suspect pleaded with her, "Please let me go, I'm hurting and I need to shoot up."

The clerk released the suspect and recovered the blue bag, which contained several china cups belonging to Noah's as well as the tip jar and two plastic baggies suspected to contain marijuana. The marijuana was turned over to responding police.

Drivers taunted

18th and Collingwood, November 11, 2:10 a.m.

A man who had been partying in the Castro returned to where he parked his car, only to find it missing. Responding police ran a computer check for the 1998 Volkswagen Jetta which was negative for city tows, and several trips around the block also failed to locate it. About five hours later, however, a passing police cruiser spotted the missing Volkswagen at the exact spot where it had been reported stolen. Nothing appeared to be damaged and the car had apparently been started with a key, as the ignition switch was still intact. The owner was notified at home and the car was released to him at the scene. Suspects are unknown. ▼

The San Francisco Patrol Special Police, which exclusively serves the Castro District, can be reached at (415) 679-1827.

Cruise the sailors this Sunday

by Katie Szymanski

Don't ever complain that your local cultural institution doesn't put out.

Images guaranteed to fulfill your fetishes and honor the symbols of our species will be on display at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society of Northern California this Sunday, when the organization hosts a roundtable discus-

sion of Kevin Bentley's book, *Sailor: Vintage Photos of a Masculine Icon*.

That's right, folks, the sailor — embraced by fags and dykes alike — is the conversational topic and eye candy of the day on November 19, as Bentley's book features the boys on and off ship, including photos of the ritual initiation of novice sailors, or "pollywogs" by older, more experienced sailors known as "sea daddies." Whew.

And as if that weren't enough, Bentley's images will be accompanied by sailor memorabilia from his private collection and photos from the GLBT Historical Society's own archives.

Author Bentley, physique photographer David Martin, and ex-sailors and the people who love them will participate in the informal discussion, from 2 to 4 p.m. at 973 Market Street, suite 400. Sunday's event is free and open to the public. ▼

Castro's gay church burglarized

by Terry Beswick

Burglars apparently pried open a rear entrance to gain access to the Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco during the night last Sunday, November 12, ransacking several offices and making off with thousands of dollars worth of equipment.

There are no known suspects to the incident at MCC-SF, located at 150 Eureka Street in San

Francisco's Castro neighborhood. The church has a primarily LGBT congregation with over 500 members.

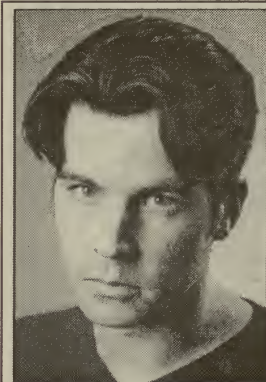
The break-in could have occurred anytime between the hours of 9:30 p.m. Sunday and 6:30 a.m. Monday, when a janitor arrived and found a rear door propped open with a cement brick, according to Officer Jane Warner of the San Francisco Patrol Special Police.

Items worth an estimated \$5,600 were discovered to be missing during an initial inventory,

while a thorough search had not yet been completed when the break-in was reported. In addition to a desktop computer, a digital camera, and leather clothing, more losses were expected to be reported.

Doors were pried open or smashed in, and a window was broken on an inner office, but no estimate of damages to the church facility was immediately available at press time.

Church officials did not respond to a request for comment. ▼



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Peaceful protest by gay Christians



Nearly 30 members of Dignity SF, Dignity San Jose, and Soulforce held a candlelight vigil at the Archdiocese of San Francisco office Monday, November 13 in a peaceful protest supporting Dignity USA and Soulforce at the Washington, D.C. meeting of the National Catholic Bishops' Conference. The groups are asking – yet again – that the church hierarchy accept all LGBT people as “beloved children of God.”

Scouts' 'Trojan horse'

by Terry Beswick

Learning for Life, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the avowedly anti-gay Boy Scouts of America, purports to provide “morality” and “self-esteem” instruction to hundreds of thousands of public school students nationwide.

And yet opponents call it a “Trojan horse” that seeks by stealth to fund an expansion of all Boy Scouts programs nationwide.

“Learning for Life is a program started by the Scouts to circumvent the policies of non-discrimination adopted by local school boards,” asserted Scott Cozza, a spokesman for the Petaluma-based Scouting for All, a national group that opposes BSA’s discriminatory policies against gays and has been a leader in encouraging school districts and other entities to break ties with the Scouts.

“It’s all about money,” Cozza said. “I don’t think anybody knows what they’re doing.”

Indeed, the 90-year-old BSA has established a multi-layered, Byzantine structure that makes funding streams difficult to track. Regional councils, such as the San Francisco Bay Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, are incorporated separately as member affiliates of BSA. The San Leandro-based Bay Area Council administers the parent organization’s traditional “morally straight” programs like the blue-uniformed Cub Scout dens for young boys and the khaki-uniformed Boy Scout troops for older boys. The Bay Area Council abides by BSA’s policy banning openly gay men from serving as troop leaders and members.

But the Bay Area Council also administers Learning for Life, which includes lesson plans targeting K-12 schoolchildren with carefully developed lesson plans, and a pre-existing program for young adults called Exploring, which links urban youth with fire departments, police departments, and other professions.

Bay Area Council spokesman Michael Dybeck said that Learning for Life has no written policy blocking gays and lesbians from serving as instructors, leaving that decision up to local sponsoring organizations, such as the Oakland public school system, where Learning for Life is currently operating, or even to individual schools within a district. He could not say whether any instructors or

volunteer leaders who were openly gay or lesbian were participating in the programs, however.

“It’s the children in the local communities that we are seeing,” said Dybeck. “With our Exploring and Learning for Life programs, they’re certified by the local sponsoring organizations.”

Learning for Life has secured corporate sponsorships from such major Bay Area players as Bank of America Securities, PG&E, Pacific Bell, and the Chiron Corporation – companies that have non-discrimination policies – by claiming that they also have a policy of non-discrimination for gays and lesbians [see “Chiron donates cash to Boy Scouts,” November 9].

“We have been assured, directly, that Learning for Life does not discriminate with respect to participation or leadership based upon sexual orientation or any other such status,” said Chiron Chief Executive Officer Sean Lance in a October 27 letter to his employees explaining his company’s recent donation to the Scouting program.

But in fact, the BSA Council has no written policy of non-discrimination for Learning for Life or its Exploring program.

“They’re talking out of both sides of their mouths,” countered Cozza, who pointed out that parent organization BSA has been unequivocal in its opposition to openly gay men serving as Boy Scout troop leaders as well as volunteer adult leaders in the career-training Exploring program, which he says also began to feel the heat from the growing campaign to discourage sponsorships from local communities and foundations.

“They found that they were losing money and so what they did is put the Exploring program under the Learning for Life Program,” Cozza said. “They have to be able to have gay leaders in the Explorer program ... [but] they’re saying that gay people are morally inferior.”

Through regional councils, BSA’s Learning for Life forms partnerships with local school districts as well as with individual schools, providing teachers a short training session on how to instruct their students on the tricky subjects of morality and ethics using a standardized course curriculum and educational materials like workbooks and videos.

BSA claims that the program aims to help schools in “preparing

youth to successfully handle the complexities of today’s society and to enhance their self-confidence, motivation, and self-worth. Learning for Life also helps youth develop social and life skills, assists in character development, and helps them formulate positive personal values.”

Among the materials are videos targeting young and adolescent boys on the hazards of sexual molestation from adult men. However, interestingly enough, although girls presumably comprise half of Learning for Life’s students, no videos are included in the curriculum designed to protect them from molestation.

In exchange for these educational “services,” according to Dybeck, school districts must pay “registration fees to the national office of about \$5 per student” enrolled in classes that include the Learning for Life instruction.

“Right now we’re in the neighborhood of 25,000 students” participating in Bay Area schools, claimed Dybeck, who said that most participating students are in the Oakland public school system. He said he didn’t know what other school systems were involved in the program, or whether schools in the San Francisco Unified School District were participating.

The council uses corporate and foundation sponsorships to underwrite the students’ registration fees.

“Where’s the money going?” Cozza asked, adding that “Learning for Life is a very low budget program.”

Dybeck has estimated that the Bay Area piece of the Learning for Life program, which is currently taught to 1.4 million schoolchildren in 20,000 schools nationwide, is about \$500,000. He couldn’t say how much of that goes to the national office.

Meanwhile, despite absorbing cuts in funding from local United Way chapters and other groups protesting its exclusion of openly gay members and troop leaders, BSA has announced a major expansion of its programs nationally, with the goal of adding full-time staff members to all regional offices in an effort to increase its million-plus membership.

Cozza said that a Boy Scouts spokesperson recently told him that Learning for Life was “like a third party program and yet, like other Scouts programs, stands for simple, universal principles such as ‘fidelity, chastity, and abstinence.’”

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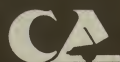
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OPEN FORUM

Hanging by a chad

Last week most of us wanted the presidential election to be over; it was not to be. More than a week after the tightest race in history, the fate of the next president is hanging by a chad, so to speak, as recounts, hand counts, and the various degrees that a chad can be separated from a ballot are vigorously debated in Florida. Who would have imagined that overseas ballots would make a difference in this election? And yet, this year, these ballots have become extremely important, as the latest vote tally has Governor George W. Bush ahead of Vice President Al Gore in the Sunshine State by a mere 300 votes.

The election has captivated the country. People are talking about it on the street, and on television, where town hall meetings with Palm Beach County voters became a staple of CNN's continuous coverage last weekend. The nation is getting a crash course in civics, while being treated to dueling news conferences by the Gore and Bush camps after every new development occurs.

The obvious partisanship in Florida displayed by Republican Secretary of State Katherine Harris continues, as she seeks to wind up the election before all the hand recounts are completed. Harris, who campaigned for Bush and was a delegate at the GOP convention, may have some explaining to do if she disallows vote results simply because the deadline has passed. While a judge ruled that she could abide by the deadline, he also gave her ample opportunity to allow the hand recount votes to be certified. Given the numerous problems in Palm Beach County, we support a full manual recounting of the ballots in that county.

But if Gore — who remains ahead in the popular vote but may lose the Electoral College vote and thus, the presidency — had done a few things differently, we might not even be in this situation. Most glaring is the fact that Gore lost in his home state of Tennessee. That state's 11 electoral votes would have put him over the top, even without Florida. It's apparent that the Gore campaign had a strategy for winning the necessary 270 electoral votes, but losing Tennessee meant that the campaign was heavily dependent on Florida. Gore also lost in Arkansas, President Clinton's home state.

That Gore, who's been in elected office much of his adult life, could not meet the challenges of a changing electorate in Tennessee, which he claims as home, might

prove to be one of his more costly mistakes.

In Missouri, the deceased Mel Carnahan, a Democrat, won the U.S. Senate race, thereby paving the way for his widow, Jean, to get a two-year appointment. We were surprised that Gore could not carry that state, since he campaigned hard there.

It's also clear from reports we've read and what we've observed of the campaign, that Gore's staff was beset with infighting and squabbling, unlike Bush's. Gore sought to recreate himself constantly throughout the campaign, and each move brought scrutiny and criticism. He should have just been himself.

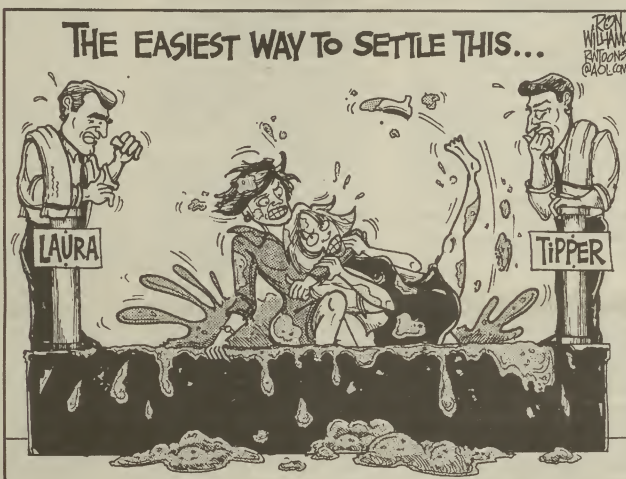
Also of importance was Green Party candidate Ralph Nader's failed bid to capture 5 percent of the nationwide vote so that the party could receive federal funds in 2004. Nader received some 95,000 votes in Florida alone, and if he hadn't been a presence there, it's likely that Gore would have carried the state. But third parties have the right to run and Gore had many opportunities to deal effectively with the so-called Nader factor. He didn't. In fact, it appears that Gore didn't see Nader coming and when the longtime consumer advocate started drawing big crowds,

media attention, and potential voters, the Gore campaign did little to counteract it. Nader may have gotten only 3 percent of the vote nationally, but, in a close election, that was enough. Nader obviously did not have the strength of Ross Perot, who garnered 19 percent of the popular vote in 1992 and probably helped Clinton win the election.

Where do we go from here? Well, we hope that whomever wins the White House will actively seek to bring bipartisanship to his administration. This means appointing people of the other party to Cabinet posts, and working with Congress to get legislation adopted. We also hope that the debate continues regarding election procedures so that the snafus that occurred in Florida can be avoided in future races. We would like to see the end of the infamous "butterfly" ballot, and we hope more modern election equipment can be purchased throughout the country. Florida is not the only state that experienced "irregularities" — they are part of virtually every election, and are only being examined because this race was so close that, as President Clinton observed last week, no one can ever say that every vote doesn't count. ▼



Editorial



It ain't over yet, get involved!

by Tommi Avicolti Mecca

It was the best of elections, it was the worst of elections.

What we gained, of course, was another chance to seat five more progressives on the Board of Supervisors, to join Tom Ammannio who easily took his own District 9. It also offers us a shot at turning the city around, a city that many of us feel is heading in the wrong direction.

What we lost was Proposition N, a measure that would have stopped most Ellis Act evictions. As it stands now, more and more people will receive eviction notices to make way for the conversion of their apartments into tenancies-in-common. It's unfortunate that the issue divided the queer community. Many queers will be among those evicted. Home ownership is fine, but, in this case, at what cost? What kind of housing policy allows for homes to be provided to one group at the expense of another? Expensive homes, too, at an average price tag outside of the reach of most San Franciscans.

Displacement was a big issue in the election, with Proposition L pitted against a last-minute effort by the mayor to pass a more developer-friendly version (Proposition K). At this writing, Proposition L was still in the running, but all of the ballots had not yet been counted. Whether Proposition L passes or fails, the issue of displacement and over development will not vanish, just as the issue of TICs will continue to divide the city, and especially the queer community. The bottom line is that thousands more could be displaced in the next year. The face of San Francisco is being given a forced facelift that may soon leave it unrecognizable.

The good news: in district races, a solid slate of anti-machine candidates, including Jake McGoldrick (District 1), Aaron Peskin (3), Matt Gonzalez (5), Chris Daly (6), and Eileen Hansen (8) shook up business-as-usual in City Hall, upsetting the mayor's plan to elect his own yes-men and women. Peskin, Gonzalez, and company will face machine types on December 12 in a runoff that could reshape the board and the issues they deal with in the coming four years. With a board that is not at the mayor's beck and call, future gentrification and displacement could be slowed or halted.

There's much dissatisfaction in the city. It came to a head last year in the Ammannio for mayor campaign that sent a political tsunami throughout the country. The recent election may not have been as big a shock wave, but it was felt nonetheless in City Hall. It was another wake-up call for Willie.

What we need to do now is reinforce that message by electing the progressive candidates we put into the runoff. It won't be an easy task. The mayor and his cronies, including those in the queer community, will pull out all stops to get his folks onto the board. There'll be tons of soft money available to them, an endless amount of mailers sent out, and fluff pieces on the "lavender slate" in the queer press. We might even see

more of those Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club billboards in the Castro.

All to convince us that voting for queer candidates, no matter what they do or do not stand for, is in our best interest. Ironic, isn't it, that last November we heard the opposite from the Alice folks — that voting for Ammannio for mayor because he's queer was not cool. Now, it's "gonadal" politics all the way.

But judging by the results of the November 7 election, you can't fool all the people all the time. Clearly, many of us understand that more is at stake here than the election of candidates simply because they're queer. The real litmus test is where candidates stand on crucial city issues such as restricting dot-com office developments in the Mission and South of Market areas.

Get involved with the race in your district. Work for Gonzalez, Daly, McGoldrick, Hansen, and Peskin. In District 11, help Geraldo Sandoval beat incumbent Amos Brown; in District 10, Sophie Maxwell will need support in outdistancing the mayor's choice, Linda Richardson.

Each of these campaigns will have to rely heavily on grassroots support, on precinct walking, on the tried-but-true method of standing on the corner with an ironing board and piles of literature and buttons.

The clock is ticking. Get involved now! ▼

Tommi Avicolti Mecca is a longtime queer activist in San Francisco.



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

GWB's fuzzy election math

In an effort to legitimize the suppression of voting rights, GWB supporters cite the 1996 ballot disqualification as evidence of a typical historical pattern of spoiled votes in Palm Beach County. This flawed reasoning is abstracted from the actual differences between the two elections. Unlike the disqualified 1996 ballots, 19,000 disqualified ballots in 2000 are absolutely decisive in the presidential election. Moreover, the 19,000 disqualified ballots are the direct product of a deceptive ballot structure that unfairly favored GWB at the expense of Al Gore by a unique mismatch between the row for Gore and the corresponding punch-hole: the left-column second row of Gore lined up with the second punch-hole but matched with the third punch-hole. As a result, many Gore voters punched the second hole that counted for Pat Buchanan in the right-column first row. Upon seeing the deceptive layout, even more voters unwittingly double-punched to reassure their choice for Gore.

In evaluating the fairness of this election, it is irrelevant to determine the intention of the election supervisor who approved the deceptive ballot. It is equally irrelevant to determine the exact number and time of complaints filed with the county election office during the voting. It is of utmost significance to consider the fact that the election supervisor acknowledged the deceptive and GWB promotional effect of the ballot structure and distributed a flyer throughout the precincts warning voters that the arrangement of the column of presidential candidates mismatched the order of the punch-holes.

In conclusion, the disenfranchisement of 19,000 people in Palm Beach County – the bulk of whom are black voters – underpins GWB's presidential election. Realizing that the suppression of democracy is indispensable to presidential victory, it is with intransigence that GWB opposes a truly fair Palm Beach County election revote. Contrary to the slander of GWB, this is not an "organized conspiracy of Democrat sore losers," but a movement to defend fundamental democracy. We oppose and resist the regression of Florida politics to an oppressive period during which elections had been routinely rigged against progressive candidates.

James Hill
San Francisco

This nonsense has to stop

I just want to say there is occasionally good that can come from closed doors and handshakes. This is the time for Al Gore and George W. Bush to go behind closed doors and decide who is to be president.

The vote in Florida is just too close. Having new elections in Florida would just open the door to recounts and accusations of fraud in other places. Gore won by a few thousand votes in other states, including Wisconsin and Iowa.

Bush getting the electoral nod by 400 votes in Florida is not a dramatically different percentage than Gore winning the popular vote by 200,000.

The country, faith in the system, and the economy will suffer if this is not decided soon.

Perhaps Bush could finish his term as governor and become president in two years, sharing the term with Gore. Or perhaps one could appoint the other secretary of state. It appears now neither candidate will be big enough to step aside for the sake of the country and the people which brings us to the real root of the problem. Neither were worth our time or vote.

Eric Miller
San Francisco

Reform Electoral College

On November 11, hundreds of citizens marched in San Francisco, seeking to abolish the Electoral College. More will demonstrate November 18 at Powell and Market streets, at 1 p.m. For information, please visit trustthepeople-SF@egroups.com.

Senator Arlen Specter's constitutional amendment (or else Maine-style reform) should be proposed by the new Congress in early 2001, and quickly adopted by the state legislatures, in time to prevent another "electile dysfunction" in 2004.

Meanwhile, when recounts end, what if Al Gore still has a nationwide plurality of citizens' votes, and George W. Bush still has a majority of pledged electors? Should the runner-up become president, while the people's choices step aside?

In mid-December, each elector will be empowered to act as a person with a conscience, or to impersonate a rubber stamp. A few brave Republican electors could vote for whichever candidate has won the most popular votes, regardless of party. Or vote Libertarian, for principles which Republicans often preach and rarely practice. Or cast symbolic votes for past Republican heroes, such as Susan B. Anthony and Abraham Lincoln.

A few individuals have a rare opportunity to honor

democracy by changing the future. They, and the rest of us, should act as though freedom really matters.

Tortuga Bi Liberty, Pat Firby,
Yolanda Warren, Walter Ciaston
San Francisco

Frosty Lott

Senator Trent Lott was quoted thusly on senator-elect Hillary Rodham Clinton: "I tell you one thing, when this Hillary gets to the Senate – if she does, maybe lightning will strike and she won't – she will be one of 100 and we won't let her forget it."

I'd be nice to Hillary if I were him. A couple – at least – of his GOP fossils are due to expire soon from old age and general meanness, and his desk may end up by the basement furnace when he once again becomes part of the minority. And besides, she's a lot smarter than him.

T.J. Pierce
San Francisco

Former supe candidate backs Daly

I wish to thank all who voted for me in the last election, and the many who offered encouragement. Our word-of-mouth campaign did well to focus attention on improving neighborhood and affirming diversity, especially in education and community facilities.

I feel we should now support Chris Daly, and urge you to consider voting for him in the runoff. I promise to stay involved. I've loved participating, and meeting so many wonderful people.

We had an excellent field. Chris Daly was best positioned on the most important issue of low-income housing. Hank Wilson spoke to improving services for the homeless and contributed the inspiring theme of "we can do better." Marc Salomon emphasized decentralizing city government to improve neighborhood participation. Beryl Magilavy discussed the operational inadequacy of city government and the need to bring it up to professional standards.

I highlighted the impact of Mission Bay development, and suggested creating a "statue of diversity" on the waterfront both as a symbol and as a vehicle for constructing community facilities. I feel Chris Daly is best able to synthesize all these concerns. I read the voting not so much as a conflict between the mayor and everyone else, as a progressive versus liberal split. If we sum the votes to Daly, Wilson, Salomon, Denise D'Anne, Magilavy, and myself as progressives, and the votes to Chris Dittenhafer, Carol Ruth Silver, Davy Jones, and Joseph Blue as liberals, we have a more or less equal split reminding us of the national situation. I feel whoever wins the runoff will have to understand this full spectrum of voters.

It's as though we've just had a primary, and now the real election begins. Chris Daly, coming from the left, has to move right to capture the center. Chris Dittenhafer, coming from the right, has to move left to capture the center. Whoever keeps their base and also captures the center will win.

Although I'm supporting Chris Daly, I feel it's right to acknowledge that Chris Dittenhafer conducted himself with dignity and grace during the candidate forums. He was often attacked with hostile questions, and handled these well. I'm glad to have met Chris Dittenhafer, and would be happy to work with him if he happens to win. Still, Chris Dittenhafer did not advance substantive positions during the forums, and he did not defend the mayor's agenda.

The mayor's indifference to runaway development and the plight of low-income people remains as mysterious as ever. The interests of the wealthy will not be served by the civil unrest that unchecked development will provoke. The mayor's team doesn't seem to get this. I am not persuaded that Chris Dittenhafer will be especially effective on the board in the back-room horse trading so important to coalition building. Having the mayor's endorsement does not guarantee success on the board, as Alicia Becerril has shown. My discussions with the incumbents I've met during the campaign indicate that Chris Dittenhafer would be viewed as a beginner with little clout.

In contrast, I feel Chris Daly has good political instinct. He already represents a coalition of diverse people from North Mission and the Tenderloin. If the coalition is widened to include more SOMA and South Beach folks, and recognizes their need to create neighborhood facilities where there used to be empty warehouses, and to provide quality education for the young families now starting to settle there, then his coalition will truly represent all of District 6. Chris Daly already has good rapport with some incumbents and some who are ahead in the runoff. Yes, Chris Daly is young. But so is the alternative. I pledge to help Chris Daly get elected, and to support his maturing into the leader our diverse neighborhood needs.

Joan Roughgarden
San Francisco

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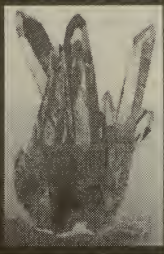
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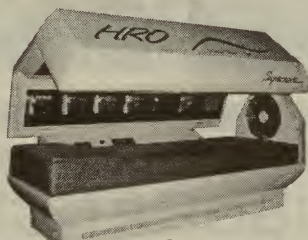
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Reconsider Dist. 10 endorsement

I am taking some time from a busy day to tell you about my recent experience in District 10. I purchased a home in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood last year and happily moved to Thomas Avenue near corner of Jennings Street. My previous rental residence for the past decade was on Potrero Hill but I could not afford the home prices there.

I now live in the heart of where the residential Bayview "flats" meet the industrial warehouses and San Francisco shoreline. My horrifying experiences at discovering the condition of the blocks around me and the shoreline has prompted some proactive involvement on my part. I walk my dog twice a day in this area and it is an experience no San Franciscan should be exposed to. I suppose this letter is motivated by sheer outrage and concern for my health and the health of my neighbors. Frankly, I was moved enough to take photographs of the sights I have discovered.

I recently had the opportunity to meet Sophie Maxwell. She visited the home of two men, sharing a wonderful Victorian in the Bayview on Quesada Avenue near 3rd Street. One of the men has been in the neighborhood for 13 years. Sophie accepted my photos, listened to the concerns of all those who attended, and promised to help give these issues voice in City Hall. I find this woman to be genuine, interested, and very involved in a family tradition started by her mother, Enola Maxwell.

The Maxwells know about representing the needs of their neighborhoods and actively bringing the needed help. The Potrero Hill Neighborhood House is Enola's legacy. Now Sophie is ready to take her stand and do her thing for Bayview-Hunters Point, Potrero Hill, Visitation Valley, Dog Patch, and Little Hollywood. There are folks in City Hall who haven't even heard of these precious and neglected parts of our great city. There is no one more qualified to finally give a true voice to District 10 than Sophie Maxwell. I don't know how many gay homes Ms. Richardson visited but Sophie Maxwell accepted the hospitality of my gay friends at their Bayview home. She came to listen to our point of view and that sure makes me want to see her get a shot at it.

I beseech you to reconsider the endorsement of Linda Richardson in District 10. As these two fine candidates approach a runoff for the seat, it is Sophie Maxwell that deserves your endorsement. Ms. Richardson is endorsed by the mayor and has built up a war chest of over \$1 million for this runoff. Sophie Maxwell needs your help and so do us gay boys in District 10.

Avner Lapovsky
San Francisco

Political club's performance

Let's look at the performance of the Toklas Club's so-called "lavender wave." In District 5, the phony progressive lesbian candidate, Juanita Owens, trails Ammiano-endorsed Matt Gonzalez by 4,000 votes. Why? Because Juanita Owens is a candidate with a deplorable history and everyone knows it. She was crucial to the decision to "contract out" Edison School to the Edison Project school privatizing ponzie scheme. She presided over the San Francisco Unified School District when Bill "Extradite Him" Rojas ran the district into the ground with his daft educational and fiscal management. It's clear that the people are on to Juanita Owens and do not trust her to oversee the city government.

In District 6, the truly pathetic Chris Dittenhafer, who took money from the very industry he was charged to regulate, crashed and burned with a one to two margin in the face of a dynamic campaign run by Chris Daly, a (gasp!) straight man who just happened to know which issue was most important to the inhabitants of his district (housing).

And in District 3, Lawrence Wong, who even Willie Brown didn't support, couldn't garner much support from either the Chinese American community or the "lavender" community in a district that includes Chinatown and the Polk. He lost to Ammiano-endorsed Aaron Peskin by 3 to 1.

And even Mark Leno, probably the best, and most independent of this year's dismal crop of "lavender wavers" (with the exception of Tom Ammiano, who distanced himself from the "wave") failed to win outright in the Castro. He will face a real challenge from the re-grouped forces of the Harvey Milk Club and Eileen Hansen in the runoff.

Ah! yes, the point.

The Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club is trying to sell us a bill of goods. It is apparent that they represent the forces of downtown money interests attempting to tame and conservatize the queer voter. In December, pay no attention to Alice, Robert Barnes, or Willie Brown and his downtown cronies. In December, don't vote for candidates merely because they wave the rainbow flag. Vote your economic and class interests.

Vince Quackenbush
San Francisco

SF 'political virgin' shares thoughts

I would like to talk about my experience as a virgin in San Francisco queer politics.

Election time is upon us and many of us received political club endorsements in the form of slate cards. These are designed by clubs to guide voters at the polls, a tool many of us appreciate come voting time. In the past I've relied on either a trusted friend's research of the propositions, issues, and candidates, or a Democratic slate card. My point is, I'm one of those folks who work a full time-plus job, a human services job where politics and public policy isn't a daily focus, and not everyone has the time to personally do the footwork to learn how San Francisco politics operates.

However, this election 2000, my partner was a candidate for office and I've been exposed to the ballot propositions, and candidates positions and qualifications. Whether I want to or not, I have had to learn about machine politics, soft money, club endorsements, and what "beholden" means.

I want to share one learning experience that was very disturbing. I attended the Alice B. Toklas Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club endorsement meeting. It was held in the private room of a local upscale restaurant with about 40 members including a popular high paid political consultant. My partner and I weren't invited to attend but rather were informed of the endorsement meeting by another candidate running in the same district as my partner. The incumbent supervisor was in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to vote "yes" or "no" on a "lavender wave" slate, consisting of all gay candidates. I found it interesting that the Alice B. Toklas Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club had chosen their endorsees without interviewing all the candidates, never mind not inviting them to present at the meeting themselves.

The meeting began with angry statements from several members regarding the club's candidate selection process. It seemed that members weren't pleased with endorsing the group as a whole but wanted the choice to vote for individuals in each district. The leaders and members argued and flailed around with Robert's Rules of Order. It was almost comical. Several members were not supporting the slate endorsement due to "T.A." I finally figured out that "T.A." referred to Tom Ammiano. The leaders of this group chose to endorse someone they knew was a shoo-in to win, (Tom), as a campaign tactic, yet couldn't even bring themselves to discuss him by name.

I learned that evening that the Alice B. Toklas Club has a history of endorsing the candidates and propositions endorsed or aligned with Mayor Willie Brown and his political machine. When I realized that, the antics at the meeting and endorsements became clear and started making sense, in a bizarre and disgusting sort of way.

Mayor "W.B." has done a poor job and despite what Alice may claim, they are aligned with his policies. From now on, I am going to think for myself, and take the time to research the issues and candidates very carefully. The Alice Club slate card will fare well at the bottom of my bird cage.

Eric Bernier
San Francisco

People with problems are treated

This is regarding the recent article entitled "East Bay man on trial for complaining about HIV treatment" [November 2].

I read with interest the article in which you reference an East Bay man's attempt to receive care and lodge complaints at Alta Bates Medical Center in Berkeley. While I cannot discuss any person's private medical or legal issues, I feel the need to respond to your article because it left the misleading impression that patients with difficult emotional or psychological problems cannot access care at our facility.

Contrary to the article, we happily serve some the most medically and socially complex people with HIV in the Bay Area. Our two clinics serve over 1,000 patients of all ethnicities, genders and sexual orientation with MediCal, private insurance, or uninsured. More than 50 percent of our clients have co-existent psychological or substance use issues. We love our patients and we relish in the diversity and complexity of their lives that they share with us on a daily basis. We are used to the struggles and difficult adjustment issues inherent in living with HIV and we have ample on-site nurses, social workers, lawyers, therapists, hypnotherapists, etc. to help patients through these difficult times. Although we will routinely "bend-over-backwards" for patients, the only line we ever draw in the sand is actual or threatened physical violence. We must do this for the protection of our other clients and our dedicated, hard working staff. As they have been for 14 years, our doors remain open to all those with HIV/AIDS who non-violently seek care.

Stephen O'Brien, M.D., Co-Director
East Bay AIDS Center
Alta Bates Summit Medical Center
Berkeley and Oakland, California

POLITICS

Waiting for a president

by Wayne Friday

Democrat **Al Gore**? Republican **George W. Bush**? Ten days after the voters went to the polls to choose this country's 43rd president, the issue is no more settled as we go to press than it was the day after the election. With the nation's electorate split evenly between Gore and Bush, the vote on November 7 produced an American presidential election the likes of which has never before been seen and unlikely to ever be witnessed again.

With the eventual decision as to who wins the presidency apparently hinging on Florida's bitterly-contested 25 electoral votes — and with the real possibility that even some already-called states like Iowa, Wisconsin, and New Hampshire and other close states like New Mexico and Oregon, could see a recount and eventually play a role in the naming of the next president — the American presidential election process has turned into a modern-day political quagmire. This week as legal teams for both Democrat Gore and Republican Bush went into action, challenging one Florida state rule after another, and as Florida's secretary of state decided to certify the election results showing Bush with a lead of some 300 votes (out of 6 million cast statewide) regardless of what the ongoing hand count of votes in contested counties shows, the two campaigns exchanged highly-partisan salvos, attempting to one-up each other in the court of public opinion. It should be noted, incidentally, that the Florida secretary of state, **Katherine Harris**, is a Republican who was a Bush delegate to the national GOP convention and a person who is known as a fierce GOP partisan with a very close relationship to Florida Governor **Jeb Bush**, a brother of the Republican presidential nominee.

It would appear, particularly to Gore partisans, that if Jeb couldn't deliver his state's electoral votes to big brother George, then one of his lieutenants (in this case, the GOP secretary of state) is only too willing to do it for him. Though Gore led Bush by more than 200,000 votes in the national popular vote, there is still a good chance that as the legal wrangling continues in Florida, and pending the outcome of votes counted from several thousand Floridians serving in the military and living overseas, that Governor Bush will be awarded the state's 25 electoral votes, and, thus, the presidency.

Regardless of who is declared the eventual winner in this bitterly-fought presidential election, the next president faces a highly partisan Congress and a country deeply divided. Will Gore or Bush be inaugurated on January 20? Possibly, but we might not even know a week from now. Like I said last week, however, the country will survive either way.

Meanwhile, in Austin, Texas, and Washington, D.C., aides to both Bush and Gore are secretly laboring to assemble the men and women who make up the next Cabinet and White House staff as Democrats and Republicans alike work to shape the next president's administration, despite the fact that we still don't know who the 43rd president will be.



Clockwise from top left: Sheila Kuehl, Carole Migden, Jackie Goldberg, and Christine Kehoe.

And, depending on the eventual outcome of this presidential mess, the Republican Party will remain in control — just barely — of the U.S. Senate. The lineup of the new Senate will likely be 51-49 Republican (if Bush wins) or 52-48 (if Gore wins); one senatorial contest in the state of Washington remains undecided, with the GOP incumbent slightly ahead.

In the House of Representatives, the new Republican majority appears to have been reduced to a 221-212 lineup with two independent members who usually vote with the Democratic minority. Last week's congressional elections actually resulted in Democrats gaining two House votes and five, possibly six, Senate seats.

Politics and people

There will be four lesbians in the California Legislature starting in January and if you want a lesson in how to win — and win big — look at this: Assemblywoman **Carole Migden** (D) won her 13th District seat with a whopping 79 percent of the vote; **Christine Kehoe** (D) won in San Diego's 76th District with 61 percent; Los Angeles City Councilmember **Jackie Goldberg** (D) ran unopposed; and in L.A.'s 45th state Senate District, Assemblywoman **Sheila Kuehl** won her Senate seat with an impressive 71 percent (Kuehl becomes the first-ever openly homosexual member of the state Senate). What a legislative caucus those four should make.

The November 7 election also saw three new Democratic women senators elected — **Hillary Rodham Clinton** in New York, **Debbie Stabenow** in Michigan, and **Jean Carnahan** in Missouri, — making it the first time in history that the U.S. Senate will have 12 women members (13 if Democrat **Maria Cantwell** wins the still undecided race in Washington over GOP incumbent **Slade Gorton**).

The California House of Representatives delegation (52 members) saw its Democratic edge rise to 32, compared to 20 GOP members, up from 27-25 Democratic prior to the election. History was also made in Delaware last week

when **Ruth Ann Minner** (D), a high school dropout, was elected that state's first-ever woman governor.

Green Party presidential candidate **Ralph Nader** certainly played a part in last week's presidential election, but what happened to **Patrick Buchanan**? Just four years ago Buchanan was a serious presidential candidate, winning the 1996 New Hampshire primary and coming close — for a while at least — to dethroning **Bob Dole** as the GOP nominee, and less than two years ago he was still an influential member of CNN's *Crossfire* program. Only days before last week's election Buchanan could be found scrambling for attention on local TV news programs, and despite being awarded \$12.6 million in federal election funds, Buchanan ended up merely an afterthought on Election Day, except for those voters in Palm Beach County, some of whom may have accidentally voted for him because of the now well-known butterfly ballot. Really, it wasn't supposed to be this way for the homophobic, anti-Semitic Buchanan; a year ago the plan was to eliminate competition from Reform Party contenders like **Donald Trump**, take over the party's \$12.6 million federal funds and storm the country, wrapped in the American flag, to a decent, if losing showing in the national polls. Instead, "Pitchfork Pat" suffered through a couple of gallbladder operations, helped to badly fracture the Reform Party, and was barred from the national debates. He will never admit it, of course, but Buchanan's biggest problem is that he and his hateful anti-gay, anti-Jewish, isolationist views have long passed. Now if only the egomaniac Nader could only get the message that despite his best efforts he could only gain an embarrassing 3 percent of his goal of 5 percent in the popular vote, perhaps he, like Buchanan, will soon understand that voters were telling him to simply go away.

Regardless of who eventually becomes president, Florida's bumbling Governor Jeb Bush will long be viewed as the man who led a state so full of balloting snafus that it screwed up the entire presidential election. Or, as one California Democrat joked (well, I hope he was joking) a week after the November 7 election: "Junior will eventually get the White

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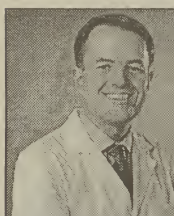
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Gay media strikes out

by Dale Carpenter

The presidential campaign laid bare a discomfiting fact: much of the gay media appears incapable of covering politics in a professional fashion. Whatever your political affiliation or ideology, that is troubling.

Many of us rely heavily on gay newspapers and magazines to learn what politicians are saying and doing on specifically gay issues. For that reason, they have a special function and responsibility to their audience.

This doesn't mean gay media should be "even-handed" or "objective" in the sense that they must be indifferent between pro- and anti-gay positions or candidates. It does mean they have an obligation to try to be fair and genuinely informative about what are often complex matters. At a minimum, they should maintain some critical distance from candidates and parties. They shouldn't let advocacy become partisanship.

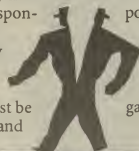
Unfortunately, when covering the 2000 presidential race, many gay newspapers simply recited the candidates' positions. Based on these recitations, they concluded — often in "news" stories rather than in editorials — that Al Gore was by far superior.

Little consideration was given to the candidates' actual commitment (or ability) to translate words into actions, yet there were strong reasons to believe Gore was deficient on this score. During the campaign, the vice president almost never mentioned his stands on things like employment discrimination laws and the anti-gay military ban. For that reason alone, Gore would hardly be in a position to claim a mandate on gay issues. The gay media rarely pushed its analysis that deep.

The shortcomings of the gay press go beyond superficiality, however. There was rampant and clear bias. When George W. Bush said something plausibly anti-gay, for example by using religious-right code language to oppose "special rights," the gay media rightly jumped all over it. But when Bush did or said something positive, gay newspapers dismissed it or reacted cynically.

A common complaint about Bush was that he would harm gay rights by appointing conservative ogres to the Supreme Court. It was an argument the gay press uncritically published again and again until it became conventional wisdom.

Yet this nightmare was greatly exaggerated. History demonstrates that presidents have little power to shape the direction of the Supreme Court. And, according to nonpartisan observers, Bush's record on judicial appointments as governor of Texas has been moderate.



OutRight

You wouldn't have known either of those things from reading the gay press.

At the same time, Gore got a free pass. When the vice president incredibly professed to have no position on

the Supreme Court's decision allowing the Boy Scouts to exclude gays and said nothing against the policy itself, his evasions and cowardice were barely mentioned in the gay press.

When it was disclosed that Gore had once cultivated a political relationship with the rabidly anti-gay Reverend Fred Phelps, including sending Phelps tickets to the presidential inauguration in 1997, most gay news outlets ignored it. At least one gay paper, which never reported the original story, published a letter from a gay Democrat disavowing it. If a grinning Bush had posed for pictures with Phelps, as Gore did, you can believe the photo would have run on the front page of many gay papers.

In a sorry season of coverage, two egregious examples of partisanship and arrogance stand out. Unfortunately, they come from two of the most esteemed organs of the gay media.

The *Advocate*, the oldest and largest-circulation gay news-magazine in the country, published what it called an interview with President Clinton. The reporter who conducted it, Chris Bull, pitched nothing but softballs at the president. Questioning Clinton about the disastrous "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" military policy, for example, Bull excused the president's fecklessness by blaming gays for the policy. This was too much even for the self-aggrandizing Clinton, who responded

ed that there was plenty of blame to go around.

That was bad enough, but it got worse. Andrew Sullivan, arguably the most influential openly gay writer in America today, observed that Bull's interview showed the gay media is "not ready for prime time." The *Advocate* responded by banning Sullivan, a conservative, from its pages.

Shortly before the election, the highly-respected *Washington Blade* published the results of a poll it commissioned on prospective gay voters' preferences. The poll found that only 2 percent of gays would vote for Bush. This conclusion was preposterous. In each of the past three federal elections, between one-fourth and one-third of gays voted Republican. Yet the *Blade* didn't question the anomalous result.

Even after the election when a national exit poll showed that 25 percent of gays voted for Bush (a figure that likely underestimates the actual gay Republican vote but is consistent with past exit polls), the *Blade* was still unapologetic. Instead, it republished its pre-election poll alongside the exit poll as if the two might be equally valid. The only explanation for this, other than haughtiness, is that the *Blade* simply cannot believe that a large segment of gay voters disagree with its editors' political preferences.

It wasn't all bad. Reporters like Bob Roehr, writing for San Francisco's *Bay Area Reporter* and other papers, intelligently and fairly evaluated the claims made by partisans on both sides. *Washington's Metro Weekly* published a lengthy, illuminating, and balanced interview-debate between gay Democrat and gay Republican leaders.

But these were exceptions. Cheer-leading editorials for Gore masquerading as news, tendentious criticism of Bush, ass-kissing interviews, bogus polls, and blacklists of dissenting writers carried the day. As citizens, we deserve better. ▼

Dale Carpenter, a law professor, is the winner of three Vice Versa awards for excellence in gay writing. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutRight@aol.com.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Faux queens, unite!



The Klubstutite Kollektive held its sixth annual Faux Queen Pageant in San Francisco Sunday, November 12. The faux drag contest for women included unique costumes, including this participant's. The event benefited the Women's Community Clinic and the San Francisco Sex Information referral line. Special guests included Judge Suzanne Westenhoffer, Deena Davenport, Fairbutch, Birdie Bob Watt, Lu Read, and this year's SF drag king, Electro.

Jane Philomen Oakland

COMMENTARY

Of roses, apples, and the transgendered

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

My mom always had the most wonderful rose bushes in the backyard of our home, filling a large flower bed with a number of different varieties. One thing I recall is the marked difference between the "old fashioned" and hybrid varieties.

The hybrid roses, as a general rule, had little or no scent: the characteristic that best defines roses was lost in favor of larger, more extravagantly colored blooms.

I was reminded of this while reading an article the other day on the plight of apple growers in the Pacific Northwest. Almost 50 years ago, these farmers set out to create the perfect Red Delicious apple. One that would be uniform in size and color, large and crisp, and a bright, unvarying red.

But they lost one vital thing in making this perfect apple: the taste. The very thing that makes a Red Delicious — well — delicious.

The courts expected Christie Lee Littleton to be a man, and thus recreated her as one. And this is what has happened to Red Delicious apples in the Pacific Northwest.

Because of this, the apple industry is taking a major government bailout after three years of loss totaling around \$760 million.

But, you ask, what does this have to do with being transgendered?

In the last few years we have seen enormous strides in our understanding of the structure of life. Cloning has been achieved, and via zygote microinjection we can manipulate life, creating things as fanciful as fluorescent bunny rabbits. We've even been able to grow a human ear on the back of a lab rat.

We live in a world where the human genome has been mapped, and specific conditions have been located within it, allowing for them to be altered or eradicated. An Icelandic scientist has now pinpointed the gene for schizophrenia, which could lead to a cure. A group of San Diego researchers are also hard at work, studying DNA sequencing as a way to wipe out chromosomal abnormalities in embryos.

This could well be a blessing, but one need only look back 100 years to see that we've traveled down a similar path before. The world of 1900 was also one of great scientific leaps, including a heightened understanding of the evolution of life via Darwin's *Origin of the Species*.

As Darwin unveiled the concept of "Survival of the Fittest," it led many to a firm belief in Eugenics, the study of hereditary improvement of the human race by controlled selective breeding.

Many carried Eugenics to an extreme. For example, many advocates of Eugenics in this country felt that our "stock" was slowly being weakened by the influx of so-called "lower races" from Europe. More than half the states introduced legislation to allow forced sterilization, and more than 60,000 Americans were sterilized because of Eugenics-based laws.

Similar feelings gained a lot of popularity in Europe as well, leading up to the Third Reich's efforts to rid Germany of those not of the supposed "master race." I doubt I need to remind you that this included not only the Jewish, but also homosexual and transgendered individuals.

There were also transgendered people who were interested in Eugenics, such as Alan Hart, a female-to-male medical doctor who pursued surgical intervention — hysterectomy — as part of the expression of their gender identity. Hart advised sterilization for anyone with "abnormal inversion." In other words, someone such as Hart. He did, eventually, get the procedure.

Today, Eugenics is largely unheard of, having lost many of its followers when the atrocities of Nazi Germany came to light. But what beliefs may be formed in this era of glowing bunnies and rats with ears grafted to their backs? Will scientists locate and delete the "transgender gene," and

make way for gender-perfect people? And in doing so, will we lose something as vital as the taste of an apple, or the smell of a rose?

I spoke with Katrina Rose, an attorney and transgender legal scholar in Minnesota, who reminded me of an important fact. "Even if the genetic aspect of transgendered humanity is eliminated," she said, "we won't disappear. More and more research is showing that gender identity is, at least partially, a product of prenatal hormonal exposure — which may or may not be genetic in origin."

"Even with a total absence of gene-based transgenderism," she continued, "it's more than conceivable that outside influences might still cause XY fetuses to get too much estrogen and XX fetuses to get too much testosterone."

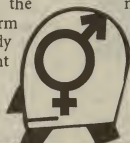
Her words did not, I'm afraid, comfort me. I do believe that there may be more at work than simple genetics, but I suspect that many of those followers of Eugenics did not adhere too closely to social Darwinism, and could see people of today following a similar path.

A recent court case in Texas, *Littleton v. Prang*, illustrates this. The court determined that a male-to-female transsexual is, no matter what procedures they undergo, legally a man. The court's decision was based on the assumption that Christie Lee Littleton's phenotypic sex is XY. No one bothered to test her before the verdict was handed down: they simply expected it to be.

Maybe that is where it all ends up. The courts expected Christie Lee Littleton to be a man, and thus recreated her as one. And this is what has happened to Red Delicious apples in the Pacific Northwest, or the roses in my mom's backyard. They were recreated to fit the expectations of others, and lost the very thing that made them special in the first place.

Perhaps recreating transgendered people to fit the expectations of others could make humanity as bankrupt as an apple grower in Washington. ▼

Gwen Smith is neither fluorescent, nor does she sport an ear on her back. She can, however, be found on the web in Gay.com's "Transgender Gazebo," and at www.gwensmith.com.



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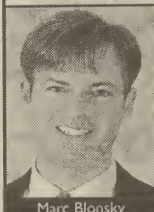
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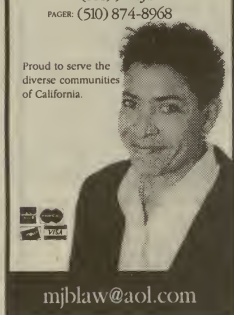
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Kissing and Kaposi's sarcoma

by Bob Roehr

A kiss is just a kiss," says the old song lyric, but it also can be a way that infections are transmitted. "Don't kiss me, I have a cold," starts to become a common phrase about this time of the year. And "mono" — mononucleosis, the malaise of teenagers — is known as "the kissing disease." Now add human herpes virus 8 (HHV-8), the virus that causes Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), to the list of infections spread through saliva associated with kissing.

The research findings appeared in the November 9 edition of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. "Mucosal Shedding of Human Herpesvirus 8 in Men," was based upon work by John Pauk and others at the University of Washington in Seattle. Much of the research was presented at an AIDS malignancies conference in May at the National Institutes of Health, when this reporter first wrote on the subject.

"One of the reasons people started looking in the mouth is because Kaposi's sarcoma often shows up first as lesions in the mouth," said Pauk. It also made sense because Epstein-Barr virus, which causes mono, is another member of the herpes virus family whose oral transmission is well established.

About 20 percent of the 112 gay men tested positive for HHV-8 in Seattle. The rate was double for those infected with HIV. At the



Dr. Lawrence Corey

May conference, research leader Dr. Lawrence Corey spoke of a detailed sub-study of 27 gay men who carried HHV-8, 11 also were HIV-positive. They took tissue and fluid samples once a week for four weeks.

They found that more than half of the men shed virus in their saliva at some point during the study. That was significantly higher than shedding found at any other body site. And the amount of virus being shed was 2.5 logs higher in saliva than in the next most active site. Each log increase is 10 times greater than the previous.

A third group of gay men was asked to collect separate daily swabs from the genital, anal/rectal, and oral areas for 47 consecutive days. Corey and his colleagues were able to isolate HHV-8 DNA from 33.7 percent of the samples

of saliva, but from only 1.3 percent of the anal samples and 0.3 percent of the urethral samples.

This pattern of HHV-8 virus actively replicating in the mouth but with little evidence of replication in semen or in the rectum, mirrors what is found with the related Epstein-Barr virus.

Those who shed HHV-8 seemed to do so rather consistently. Men coinfected with HIV seemed more likely to shed HHV-8, but the study was too small to reach a definitive conclusion.

The NEJM paper listed three independent risk factors for infection with HHV-8. One is a history of sex with someone who has KS. Another is a history of deep kissing with an HIV-positive partner. The final risk factor was use of amyl nitrite, or "poppers," though the reason for this was unclear. It may be that poppers affect a biological mechanism that makes one more vulnerable or it may be that men who use poppers engage in activities that put them more at risk.

Hold the paranoia

These research findings are scientifically interesting, but there is no reason to become paranoid about one's daily life, researchers said. "In most people [HHV-8] seems to be a very benign virus like mono," said Douglas Ward, an AIDS doctor in Washington, D.C. "You can't say, have zero concern, but it isn't something you should be changing your life for."

"Look at HSV-1," the herpes simplex virus, said Ward, "85 percent of people carry it and don't have problems. The same thing is true with KS. A lot of people carry the virus who don't have KS." A healthy immune system keeps most of the herpes family viruses under control most of the time. Problems tend to emerge as the immune response becomes severely compromised with advanced age or disease.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has said that there is insufficient data for them to issue guidelines on the risk of acquiring HHV-8 through deep kissing. ▽

UCSF: More HIV surveillance needed among gays

by Terry Beswick

It may come as no surprise that the federal government is spending a disproportionate amount of funding trying to curb the spread of HIV among heterosexuals.

But given the fact that rates of HIV infection among heterosexuals appear to be falling — at a time when infection rates among gay and bisexual men are either stable or on the rise — researchers at the University of California, San Francisco are saying enough is enough.

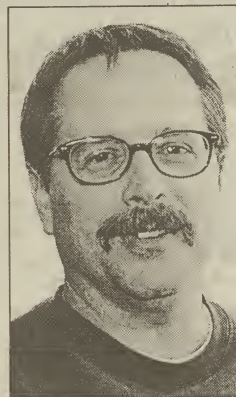
In "HIV Prevention: U.S. Priorities," published in the October 28 issue of *Science*, Joseph A. Catania, Ph.D., and other researchers with UCSF's Centers for AIDS Prevention Studies called for a major shift in priorities based on cost-effectiveness grounds.

In the paper, the researchers assert that it would be far more efficient for federal prevention resources to be directed toward gay and bisexual men, rather than toward populations where HIV is clearly on the decline.

"The cost-effectiveness of prevention efforts depends on the prevalence in the field," said Catania, speaking with the *Bay Area Reporter*.

But after Catania and his colleagues at CAPS conducted an extensive analysis of HIV risk reduction funding from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, they determined that funding priorities are being misplaced. Resources are being allocated based on old AIDS case data that looks at where the epidemic was going in the past, rather than the best available HIV surveillance data that shows where the epidemic is going today.

Men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 46 percent of AIDS cases in 1999 and yet received only 28 percent of HIV risk reduction funding, noted the re-



Joseph Catania

searchers. Meanwhile, risk reduction for heterosexuals accounted for 31 percent of the spending even though heterosexual transmission accounted for just 17 percent of the cases.

"The allocations would make more sense if one believes that the HIV epidemic is declining among men who have sex with men," said Catania.

"HIV prevalence and incidence declined during the 1980s for urban MSMs. However, HIV incidence plateaued for MSMs over the past decade, and incidence and prevalence generally remain at very high levels. In contrast, heterosexual prevalence levels, which have always been very low (<1%), have declined over the past decade, suggesting that incidence has decreased during this time period," wrote Catania and his co-authors in the *Science* paper.

The researchers called for a shift from the current focus on AIDS and HIV case-based reporting which gives a "window on the past" to an emphasis on sentinel surveillance systems that could provide "a much needed window

next page ►

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Rosenkrantz lawyer files suit against gov.

by Ed Walsh

Attorneys for gay prisoner Robert Rosenkrantz filed a lawsuit against Governor Gray Davis this week asking that a Superior Court judge overturn the governor's decision that blocked Rosenkrantz's parole.

Rowan Klein, the private attorney representing Rosenkrantz, and Donald Specter, director of the nonprofit Prison Law Office, filed the suit on Tuesday, Novem-

ber 14, with Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Kathryn Ann Stoltz.

Stoltz had previously ruled that Rosenkrantz had been unfairly denied parole and ordered that the Board of Prison Terms release him. Stoltz's ruling was strongly affirmed by the 2nd District Court of Appeals. The Board of Prison Terms reluctantly finalized its parole order in September and sent it to the governor, who blocked Rosenkrantz's parole late last month. If Davis had simply

done nothing, Rosenkrantz would have been freed for the first time since his arrest 15 years ago for killing his basher in Calabasas, in Los Angeles County.

The Rosenkrantz case has been a *cause célèbre* for prisoners' rights groups concerned over Davis's hard line against parole. Davis once vowed to stop the parole of all convicted murderers. Since taking office in January 1999, he has only allowed parole for one murderer, Rose Ann Parker, who was convicted of second-degree murder

for killing her abusive boyfriend in 1985.

Rosenkrantz was convicted of the 1985 shooting death of his former high school classmate, 17-year-old Steve Redman. The shooting ended a chain of events that began a week earlier when Redman, along with Rosenkrantz's younger brother, burst into a high school graduation party hosted by Rosenkrantz, yelling "faggots." Redman broke Rosenkrantz's nose with a flashlight and later outed him to his father.

A week after the attack, the 18-year-old Rosenkrantz confronted Redman outside Redman's home. According to Rosenkrantz's testimony, he demanded Redman come with him to his parents' house and take back his outing. Rosenkrantz was carrying an Uzi and threatened to shoot up Redman's car if he didn't comply. The two argued and Rosenkrantz opened fire, shooting Redman 10 times. He eventually turned himself in, was convicted of second-degree murder, and sentenced to 17-years to life. ▼

Election

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then held a meeting on national television and voted 2-1 to proceed with a countywide hand recount. The county suspended that count on Tuesday, then resumed Wednesday morning amid the various court challenges.

Meanwhile people took to the streets in Florida and cities across the country protesting the elec-

tion results and numerous voting irregularities in Florida. A badly designed "butterfly" ballot may have led thousands of Gore supporters in Palm Beach County to mistakenly cast their votes for Reform Party candidate Pat Buchanan. While some called for a revote, the Gore and Bush spokespeople took to the airwaves after each development.

In downtown San Francisco, hundreds of people turned out at a demonstration at Market and

Powell streets, calling for a revote and supporting the fact that as of this week, Gore still leads in the national popular vote. Some protesters also called for the abolition of the Electoral College, which has never fared well in public opinion polls, but would take a constitutional amendment to change.

Activists plan a second rally in downtown San Francisco and other cities across the country this Saturday, November 18, at 1 p.m. For more information, see www.trustthepeople.com.

The country seemed transfixed by the undecided presidential contest, and several weekend polls revealed that most Americans were in favor of waiting until votes are counted, which has been Gore's strategy.

Bush, on the other hand, huddled with his advisers last weekend at his ranch near Waco, and met with people thought to be on his short list for possible Cabinet posts as well as his running mate, Dick Cheney. ▼

UCSF

◀ previous page

on the future."

"All the AIDS case data has become completely useless," Catania noted. "I'm not the first person to realize that."

"If you look at AIDS cases, there is a decline in cases among MSMs and an increase in heterosexual cases. However, if you look at the incidence of HIV, meaning the rate of new infections, and the prevalence of HIV, meaning the proportion of individuals in a population infected with the disease, you get a different picture. There seems to be a decline among heterosexuals and stable or increasing rates among MSMs," said Catania, the paper's lead author and an assistant professor of medicine with UCSF CAPS. "Unfortunately, our focus has been on AIDS cases, which give a picture five to 10 years out of phase with the epidemic. Frankly, we've lost track of the disease."

"This is my frustration, is that we don't have high quality data, and we can't get the NIH and CDC to fund this research," Catania said. "What we need is four good surveys in every high risk population over the next 10 years."

A developmental psychologist, Catania said he also worries about the complete lack of information or research on the population at greatest risk: young people.

"The challenge is really to focus on gay children and gay adolescents who really need a lot of nurturing and care to deal with their emerging sexuality," Catania said.

But the researchers said that now is the time for the federal government to catch up with the science and try to get ahead of the ball, if for no other reason, than simply to save money that would otherwise have to be spent on preventing more infections and caring for more people with HIV down the line.

"The financial costs of collecting probability-based samples and biological data present barriers to many local communities. However, oral HIV testing and 'detuned' assays are methodological developments that reduce data collection costs. In addition, the high costs of obtaining probability samples can be decreased," said the CAPS researchers.

"The United States has yet, however, to finance long-term HIV surveillance systems of high risk populations that are based on current advances in scientific sampling," the paper concluded. "Unfortunately, greater emphasis is placed on HIV case-based reporting than on sentinel surveillance. The former is a window on the past, while the latter is the much-needed window on the future." ▼

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Raymond Burr

◀ page 1

told him early on in his career.

"Flynn told him, 'If I die with more than \$10 in my pocket, I haven't done a good job of it.' And Raymond remembered that and used to tell me about that all the time.

"He was making great amounts of money but he would use it up as fast as he made it. He would use it up before he got it. He would be sending people on trips and taking people with him and going everywhere and having big parties, and he never spent any money on himself per se."

Countless charities benefited from Burr's generosity. He built a school for local children in Fiji and financed the education for 30 Fijian children in the United States.

Despite the current financial challenges, Benevides is optimistic of keeping the business going.

"I do feel very positive about what's happening now," said Benevides. "The wines are going to sell themselves. I'm not a Pollyanna but I know if we can make the wonderful wines that we're making, and we can sell them, then we'll be all right."

Benevides believes living in the vineyard may have lengthened Burr's life. With one glimpse of the breathtaking view of the hillside vineyard and Bradford Mountain, it's easy to see why.

But Burr may have hastened his death through his own selfless spirit. In January 1993, at the age of 75, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He delayed an operation so he could finish television movies featuring Perry Mason and Ironsides out of a sense of obligation to the production crew.

"He did feel like he would be letting the people down if he didn't do as much as he could," said Benevides. "He worked the last couple of shows in great pain because of the cancer. But he would still joke on the set and still do all the things he's always done. Nobody knew what great pain he was in."

Burr died on September 12, 1993, as he would have wanted it, at home and alongside Benevides.

Benevides vividly recalled two strange but reassuring things that happened on the night after Burr's death.

"You don't have to put this in your article," he said, "people will



The entrance to the Raymond Burr Vineyards in Healdsburg.

think I'm nuts.

"He used to wear YSL cologne. When I went from one part of the room to the other, there was kind of a cloud in the middle of the room that was pure YSL. I just thought that was him."

That same night, Benevides remembered with fondness standing in front of Burr's sink in their double-sink bathroom.

"The lights went out. And I walked out of the room and the lights came back on again in about an hour. They've never gone off again since then.

"I felt that it was him telling me that he's still here but maybe I thought that because that's what I wanted. You know I needed that in those days to get me through. It was just so obvious to me what it was. And I didn't imagine it. It wasn't something I wanted to imagine. It was something that happened. And it wasn't scary. I wasn't frightened because I had a sense that he was doing it just to let me know he was there."

Burr and Benevides first met in 1955 when Benevides, then 25, delivered a script to Burr. That was two years before the debut of the *Perry Mason* series. Benevides met Burr for a second time about four years later when he acted in a *Perry Mason* episode. Benevides played the part of a casino pit boss. Burr later hired Benevides to write for the show and eventually he worked as Burr's producer.

Benevides said Burr believed he had no choice but to hide his sexuality if he wanted to continue to work.

"He was very old fashioned in that the only way that he ever felt that he could be a leading man was to be unblemished and that he would not be accepted any other way," he said. "And it's true.

In Hollywood, they are very homophobic. Although it's basically run by gay people even the gays have their homophobia. They're still dealing with the same kind of idea that you can't be gay and play a husband. It's supposed to be acting but you don't get that kind of mentality yet. It may come. It may not."

At the end of Benevides's hourlong interview with the *B.A.R.*, he stood up and glanced at a portrait of Burr, as Benevides remembered him most, dressed simply in what he usually wore when he wasn't in front of a camera: denim pants, a white shirt, and a denim jacket.

"Needless to say, I think of him everyday," said Benevides. "It's a hole that will never be filled."

"If you have just one person that loves you that unconditionally in your life you are very lucky." ▼

The Raymond Burr Vineyards tasting room is on 8339 West Dry Creek Road in Healdsburg. It is open for complimentary tasting daily from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. Free tours of the orchid nursery are available on weekends. Because of limited parking, they prefer visitors call ahead to make an appointment at 888-900-0024.

From San Francisco: Take 101 north to Canyon Road, go west along Canyon about 2 1/2 miles to Dry Creek Road, make a right on Dry Creek Road over Yokim Bridge. Just over the bridge, you'll see the driveway to the Raymond Burr Vineyard on the left, veer right at the end of the driveway. For more information, check out their Web site at www.raymondburrvineyards.com.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Gay and lesbian candidates did well on Election Day

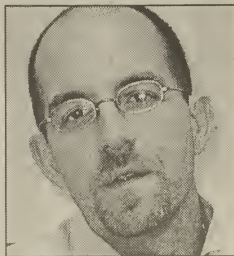
by Bob Roehr

Gay and lesbian candidates endorsed and financially supported by the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund did very well on Election Day. Some 24 won outright, one is headed for a runoff, and three are close enough to wait for a full count of absentee ballots. That is a pretty good return on 39 endorsements.

But Victory Fund Executive Director Brian Bond was not in a bragging mood when he sat down for an interview; his tone was more reflective. "When I first took this job, I met with Ellen Malcolm [founder of Emily's List, which supports pro-choice Democratic women running for Congress]. People tend to put things in terms of wins and losses, percentages. She said, that is not what is important. What is important is what is historic."

"So when you have a new and first time openly gay state rep [Chris Kolb] going to the Michigan state Legislature, that is historic," said Bond. "When you have a Karla Drenner going to the Georgia state Legislature, that is historic."

Bond said that the presence or absence of GLBT legislators affects the type of legislation that emerges from those chambers. He



The Victory Fund's Brian Bond

points out that four of the five states that passed pro-gay legislation this year had openly gay members, while three of the four states that passed anti-gay laws had no GLBT representation. "Who is going to speak better for us," he asks, "a friend or our own?"

Another trend he sees is that "we are moving out of the cities." Some of the most interesting successes have been in areas far from the gay ghettos. Bond speaks with pride and awe of Julia Boseman, elected to the New Hanover County Commission, which includes Wilmington, North Carolina. "She probably ran the most modern campaign that county has ever seen," said Bond. Most people would have been happy winning the third of three

seats, but Boseman beat out an incumbent to top the list.

Gay baiting is still going on, but generally the volume has been turned down, and is much subtler. He used an example from Tammy Baldwin's re-election race for Congress in Wisconsin. "The code word to me was 'special interest money,' meaning money from outside the district that came mainly from gays and women." More heavy-handed approaches often backfire as American voters become more comfortable with gay and lesbian candidates.

California dreaming

Gerrie Schipske still has her fingers crossed that she can pull out a victory in the 38th Congressional District of California. Incumbent Republican Steve Horn has not yet declared victory and Schipske is pinning her hopes on the remaining absentee ballots that were delivered to polling places on Election Day. She is down by almost 2,000 votes and would have to do extremely well among that segment to pull off the upset.

Bond is not surprised by the tightness of the race. Many thought that Schipske would not win the Democratic primary, but she did, and "came out of it with

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What to do when the bills come in

**by Ali Hall, AIDS
Legal Referral Panel**

The following is an occasional column compiled by the AIDS Legal Referral Panel on issues of concern to people living with AIDS.

Dear AIDS Legal Referral Panel, I stopped working in 1992, when I was diagnosed with AIDS and my doctors gave me less than two years to live. I'm still here.

Eight years ago, I had perfect credit and lots of cards - since then, I have basically lived off of them, up to their limits. Now, my sole source of income is government benefits.

Yesterday, I got another letter from a collection agency. Needless to say, I can't pay them anything. What do I do, as I'm living in Credit Bondage In San Francisco

Sound familiar? Are you facing a mountain of debt? Not much hope of paying it off? With a little knowledge and a little help, you can go a long way toward relieving the stress you're experiencing.

Get your hands on it

You need to know where you are. Ordering your credit report is a great place to start. You can get a copy of your credit report by contacting one of the three main credit reporting agencies: Experian (formerly TRW), 1-888-397-3742; TransUnion, 1-800-851-2674; or Equifax, 1-800-685-1111.

Secret: Experian's report is considered to be the most consumer-friendly, and is actually designed to be almost readable. Good news: at worst, it will only cost you \$8 to get one. At best, it is free, if for example you receive government benefits. Check to see if you qualify.

Don't worry (yet) if your credit report looks bad. First, see if any negative information is over seven years old or incorrect. Mistakes on credit reports are common: you absolutely have the right to dispute anything you believe was reported in error. Do it! The report should give you instructions for filing your dispute.

Second, even if what they say about you is true, talk back. You are entitled to add a 100-word statement to your credit file, explaining a particular entry. Here, for example, you can explain that your medical bills went into collection only because the insurance company took so long haggling over the claim.

You can also request that the credit bureau send the statement to anyone who received a copy of your report within the previous six months.

Play it up

You are also entitled to try and overshadow negative notations by adding any missing credit histories of accounts you do pay on time.

The wolf is at the door

Sure, creditors have a right to contact you, but it is illegal for them to harass you. For example, under the law, bill collectors cannot use obscene or profane language, threaten to harm you, your relatives or friends, repeatedly use the telephone to annoy you, threaten to get your public benefits cut off, and so on. If you feel you have been harassed, get help. ALRP is one good source: we can show you how to write a letter to protect your rights.

You can't get blood from a turnip

One of your most powerful weapons in keeping the wolf at bay is explaining to your creditors that you are "judgment proof." Basically, this means that your property is "exempt," that is, it can't be taken by your creditors to pay what you owe them. If you receive government benefits like SSI, have limited personal property, and own no or limited real estate, you are probably judgment proof.

More good news

You don't have to do any of this alone. If you're looking at your finances and find yourself cringing when the phone rings or not wanting to look in your mailbox, you need an ally. ALRP is around to help you get on your way out of

credit bondage - and so are other organizations, like Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS), which does a wonderful job of negotiating lower payment plans, consolidating your debt, and (often) getting interest and late charges dropped.

If you have more than a small fistful of creditors, you may want to consider bankruptcy. Bankruptcy is actually a simple procedure that involves filing some papers, paying a \$200 court fee and usually some attorney fees. If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee all at once, you may apply to pay it in three installments.

When you emerge from the bankruptcy process, you keep your exempt property (such as your home, pensions, some personal property, public benefits, insurance, tools, and some wages) but your debts (with some notable exceptions) are wiped out (Chapter 7) or restructured (Chapter 13). Chances are you'll need some help deciding if bankruptcy is right for you - it is a great solution for many people, but requires some follow-through.

Since 1983, ALRP has provided free and low-cost legal services for people with HIV in the San Francisco Bay Area. ALRP provides direct services and referrals to HIV-sensitive panel attorneys. ALRP can assist you in a variety of matters, including credit and bankruptcy, insurance and employee benefits, wills and powers of attorney, landlord-tenant relations and housing issues, government benefits, employment, confidentiality, and establishing child guardianship. This article is not intended as legal advice for your specific situation. ▼

Visit us on the World Wide Web at <http://www.alrp.org>. Do you have any questions you'd like answered? E-mail Ali Hall, ALRP client advocate, at: ali@alrp.org; call us at (415) 701-1100 or (510) 451-5353; or write: 205 13th Street, Suite 2170, San Francisco, CA 94103-2461.

Gay candidates

◀ previous page

very little money." She "put together a good field operation and ran a hell of a race," he said.

The results were sunnier for the other major lesbian candidates on the ballot in California. Sheila Kuehl stepped up from the state Assembly to become the first openly gay or lesbian person elected to the state Senate, with an astounding 71 percent of the vote. Jackie Goldberg faced no general election opponent in moving from the Los Angeles City Council to the Assembly. Christine Kehoe made a similar transition in San Diego, with 61 percent of the vote, while in San Francisco, Carole Migden returned to the Assembly with 79 percent of the vote.

"Doubling our representation in Sacramento is going to have a tremendous impact on moving legislation next year," said Bond. Governor Gray Davis has promised to be more open to those moves and not veto pro-gay bills as he did this year.

Arizona booms

Arizona has an unusually high number of openly gay elected officials for a state of its size. The even more unusual fact is that most of them are Republicans. Jim Kolbe was thought to be in trouble, targeted by the Democratic National Congressional Committee as one of the seats they needed to win to gain control of the House. But with a strong campaign he swept back into Congress with 60 percent of the vote, while his Democratic opponent garnered just 35 percent with the balance going to two minor party candidates. "This should permanently take him off the target list," said Bond.

State Representative Steve May, also a member of the Army Reserves who is being prosecuted under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," handled his re-election bid in the heavily Republican district like a pro. "Everybody in the community came together to help him raise the resources early, which sent a signal to the local Republican Party," said Bond. He was able to scare off any serious primary challenge and coast to an easy re-election.

State Representative Ken

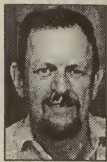
Cheuvront had no primary worries and an equally easy November romp in his heavily Democratic district. The day after the election he was chosen Democratic leader of the 24-member delegation in the 60-member Arizona House of Representatives.

Furthermore, the two leading homophobes in the Legislature were defeated at the polls. "It says a lot about Arizona, that they will take only so much ranting," said Cheuvront. One of the Republicans lost her re-election bid in a heavily Republican district while the other lost in an attempt to move to the Senate.

The icing on the cake may be election of a third openly gay state representative, Ed Poelstra, who ran below the radar screen of the national organizations. He eked out a 138-vote margin of victory to claim the second seat in a two-member district when the Green candidate drew enough votes from the second Democrat. Poelstra is a Republican, a fact that does not please Cheuvront, but "at least he's gay." A recount is automatic in such close outcomes before the vote is certified. ▼

OBITUARIES

Martin A. Thiessen (Mat)



Mat, as known to many, a resident of Castro Valley, passed away on October 17, 2000 from a heart condition. He is survived by his loving partner David Freitas of over three years. Mat was born in Chicago, Illinois and moved to the Bay Area, when his family relocated to Antioch, California, at five years of age. He

attended Antioch High School and served in the US Navy.

Mat was a lifetime member of the National Model Railroad Club, and was a model railroader.

Mat will be missed by many, lifelong close friends. He left this earth quite suddenly, but everyone has a space in their heart for Mat. He like to entertain and host dinners for friends. He made some of the best dishes, and loved Christmas like a kid at heart, especially with the trains.

Mat's services were handled by the Neptune society. Any contributions can be sent to your favorite AIDS charity in Mat's name.

OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries must be typed and no longer than 200 words. If you're submitting a photo of the deceased, write their name on the back. If you include a SASE for the photo's return, write the person's name on the inside of the envelope flap. All obituaries must include a contact name and phone number. Deadline for obituaries is Monday at 5 p.m.

Our Man Friday

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House; hell, if his governor brother can't steal enough votes from a shoddy state where more than 6 million were cast to throw it to Bush, then the kid doesn't even deserve to be the governor."

If George W. Bush becomes president, he would be only the second son of a former president to win the White House. The first was, of course, the nation's sixth president, **John Quincy Adams**, who served from 1825-1829, taking office 24 years after his father, **John Adams**, was president from 1779-1801.

Should Al Gore become president, he would become only the second son of a U.S. senator to become president. The first: **George H.W. Bush**.

Vermont Governor **Howard Dean** (D), who earlier this year signed the law granting same-sex couples most of the rights and privileges of marriage, was re-elected to a fifth term despite a hard-fought campaign waged by those who opposed the civil unions for gays and a GOP nominee for governor who made her opposition to gay rights her major campaign issue.

All three openly gay House of Representatives members — **Tammy Baldwin** (D-Wisconsin), **Barney Frank** (D-Massachusetts), and **Jim Kolbe** (R-Arizona) were easily re-elected to their House seats last week.

Democrat **Gerrie Schipske**, an openly lesbian candidate from California's 38th Congressional District, trailed her incumbent GOP opponent by less than 1,700 votes with some absentee ballots to be counted and it appears she will fall just short of winning that race.

Hillary Rodham Clinton made history in New York state in winning her U.S. Senate race not only by being the first first lady ever to win an election, but also by being the first woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate from New York.

Incidentally, speculation has already begun as to where in Washington Senator-elect Clinton

will live once she takes over her Capitol Hill duties and leaves the White House. Aides to Mrs. Clinton say she "definitely will not" be moving to the Watergate, the district's power condo facility where one **Monica Lewinsky** once lived.

Voters in Mendocino County, California decided it's high time to partially decriminalize their most valued cash crop — marijuana; in the first such ballot measure in the nation, voters easily passed Measure G that allows residents of the North Coast (Ukiah area) county to cultivate up to 25 marijuana plants apiece. Measure G faced no organized opposition and passed on November 7 with 58 percent of the vote. Mendocino becomes the first community to sanction growing cannabis. Measure G doesn't mean marijuana is completely legal in Mendocino County — state and federal drug laws still apply, as well as the limitations to 25 plants, leaving one to ask if the grass is really greener this side of Election Day.

San Jose elected its first openly gay city councilmember, the popular **Ken Yeager**, in the city's 6th District.

Last Tuesday's election saw the Democratic Party, already in firm control of Sacramento, picking up one state Senate seat from the GOP (Democrat **Tom Torlakson** took a seat away from GOP incumbent **Richard Rainey** in the East Bay's 7th District), while the Democrats also picked up three previously Republican seats in the Assembly, making the Democrats very strong with a 26-14 majority in the state Senate and a huge 50-30 majority in the Assembly. Incidentally, 32 members of the Assembly will be newly elected when the Legislature convenes in January. Meanwhile, last week's voting left just one very lonely Republican holding either a legislative or congressional seat in the entire Bay Area — Contra Costa County's Assemblywoman **Lynn Leach** was re-elected.

At the same time, Oakland Assemblywoman **Audie Bock**, the Assembly's only independent member, who won election last

year as a Green Party candidate, took a whipping as she was wiped out of her 16th District seat by Democrat **Wilma Chan** by a whopping 68-22 percent.

In other California contests, Superior Court Judge **Dick Murphy**, a conservative Republican, became mayor of San Diego in that city's nonpartisan election and City Councilmember **Heather Fargo**, a Democrat, is the new mayor of Sacramento, while actor **Alan Autry**, who played "Bubba" in the TV series *In The Heat of the Night* was elected the new mayor in Fresno.

Nationally, 50.7 percent of the country's eligible voters, or 104.5 million people, cast ballots November 7, up slightly from 49.1 percent of eligible voters who cast ballots in 1996.

Incidentally, early on Election Day morning (even before she had voted) I spoke with Senator **Dianne Feinstein**, who told me: "Watch Florida, Wayne, what happens there tonight will be very important."

And how about the networks' sorry performance on election night? It was pretty amusing watching CBS' **Dan Rather** try to make excuses for his and his network's screw-ups: Rather used every alibi he could think of — "early indications were premature, exit polls were wrong, absentee ballots weren't yet counted, the number of overseas ballots is unknown," etc. Only NBC's **Tom Brokaw** had the honesty and grace to say what everyone was thinking about the networks foul-ups. Brokaw: "We don't just have egg on our face, we have an omelet."

Finally, my "Quote of the Week" (well, actually there are a couple). Mayor **Willie Brown** on why voters had such a difficult time deciding between George W. Bush and Al Gore: "It's the insufficient versus the insufferable." Then there's the GOP's **Dick Cheney** on having lived in Washington: "One of the things I had to get used to in Washington — and still haven't — is that everybody kisses everybody else."

And how was your week? ▼

Drug reform law

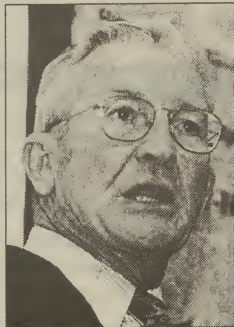
◀ page 1

statewide.

Hallinan is the only D.A. in the state who supported the measure, a position that has once again earned him a "soft on crime" reputation from some law enforcement agencies and others, a criticism he dismisses as ignorance.

"They get this mindset that prosecuting is all there is to do, whereas I feel our job is to reduce crime and reduce recidivism, which is what this does," said Hallinan, who is proposing that San Francisco add job training and family counseling to the new law's treatment mandate, since detox is often "just the beginning" for people hoping to reshape their lives.

"Simple possession is the second leading cause of a three strikes conviction," lamented Hal-



District Attorney Terence Hallinan

linan. "Instead of sending people to be disposed of as criminals, this law tries to give them a good second chance."

Officials have also worried that there will not be enough room in

California's "already overcrowded" treatment programs for newly convicted offenders, but that concern is rarely a factor when the topic is overcrowded prisons, where the solution is always, "create more."

Hallinan's November 29 meeting is open to the public and will be held at the West Bay Conference Center, 1290 Fillmore, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. A host of community leaders will be on hand, including the newly-appointed Kathryn Jett, head of California's Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, and judicial representatives from the state of Arizona, where a similar diversion law was passed four years ago, and has reportedly been successful.

"It will be a working session, to figure out what the definition of treatment will be under Prop. 36," said Hallinan, "and to determine where we will go from here." ▼



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Jaws

by Jim Provenzano

It ain't all that much," says Andrew Pusser (pronounced Pew-Say) of the number of complaints his Sheriff's Department receives per year about wild alligators in Palm Beach County, Florida.

Andrew Pusser, you see, is an alligator wrangler.

Pusser says his county gets hundreds of calls, while the state gets 14,000 complaints a year, less than the 19,000 tossed-out votes that were mangled in the rich direction this year.

Mr. Pusser catches gators that waddle up onto golf courses and parking lots. It is only occasionally glamorous, usually when it's videotaped. When a pair of boys in Tallahassee got \$20,000 from Dagwood Rashad's *Real TV* on Fox, for videotaping a gator chomping down on a local pet, more kids started baiting the scaly creatures into performing tricks.

Pusser had no problem posing with a gator for an automobile ad (see pic #1) after his talents were displayed on *Damn, That's Amazing!*, but who's counting?

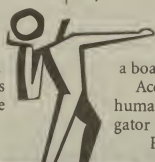
Feeding an alligator is fine-worth, up to \$500, less than giving cigarettes to a minor, but nobody's been arrested for that, or fixing elections yet.

Over a million gators live in Florida, not counting the gangs of CIA retirees who dump boxes and boxes of votes in Democratic

counties, and feed them to those gators.

"We been cullin' gators for years," Pusser smirks. "And them Jewish votes, too."

Mr. Pusser remains unfazed by the mutually incompetent coups being waged by both corporations. He is a strong supporter of both GOPers, Jeb and W. They go way back, "like snaketree roots" he says.



Sports Complex

"He won, and it's time to move on," he spits, while cleaning a boat.

According to human/not-human statistics, there's one gator for every 14 people in Florida.

According to exit polls, there's one Pat Buchanan for two every piles of GOP dung-coated lies.

"Trapping isn't a sport, it's pest control," says Pusser, who resents the recreational use of alligators by wayward teens with video cams.

He's tired of having to work so hard.

Oddly, Mr. Pusser has never been an "animal activist." (sic) He hunts for pleasure and for a living. Happy is the man whose vice is his career.

In addition to the harvest, autumn brings on new trends, along with following the mating and migratory patterns of gators. Pusser likes to catch 'em when they're small, small being "10 feet or under."

What is his clue to finding these creatures?

Said one resident, 64-year-old



The truth is here: A trusty gator wrangler poses with a Florida ballot box.

Gore voter and lifelong Democrat, Melenda Arcadia, "The dogs start disappearing."

Stupid pet tricks

Florida is a state where you can enjoy a myriad of cultures, usually within or outside gated communities. It is a state that closely resembles the Cenezoic Age, with lizards of all size considered cockroaches, and cockroaches serving as M&Ms for gators.

Growing up down there would naturally make one inured to the potential terror of a gator chomp, even a teen or a stupid pet.

So imagine the reliable sight of a pair of gut-heavy sheriffs claiming to be taking the ballots, which are also often carried by Boy

Scouts. The elections are often held in churches. Baptist churches. Southern Baptist churches. These men save lives, so we can trust them.

But we're talking about gator wrestling as sport, since face it, half the country who call themselves "sportsmen" are white men with guns who shoot "animals."

One Florida resident, John Bonet, was almost arrested for — and his home videos show him — feeding an alligator.

At Lake Ashby, a boy was eaten alive. No telling what he was up to. There were no pictures, as there were no pictures of the thugs Jeb Bush's underlings hired to "disappear" the boxes of ballots in Naples, Florida. According to two family friends, at the Baptist church where elections were held,

the wife of the married straight couple was told "she'd already voted."

When Mr. Pusser does actually work (about three hours a day), he snags the creature around the jaw with a leash. It tightens. After straddling the gator from behind, sometimes with a pal riding behind him, like a scaly rodeo, Mr. Pusser uses the most reliable hunting tool: duct tape.

Pusser gift-wraps the gator like a banded lobster. This represents: A) the struggle for survival between species, B) the struggle for survival between parties, C) interspecies SM, just more proof of how perverted heterosexuals are.

"Strange, ain't it?" Mr. Pusser chuckles. His third gator of the day has been dumped off to parts unknown, except to shoe and purse manufacturers.

Only nine human deaths in the last 50 years were from a gator chomp.

This is not the first election slaughtered in the same manner, Pusser notes that "it certainly is the noisiest ever."

Pusser prefers not to continue discussing the politics of his state, preferring to state how many lives he's saved, despite their politics; "Mostly human ones, and a few dogs."

It's not all glory. After extracting a poodle from the belly of one gator, the elderly owner sued him when the pooch emerged mangled.

Says Pusser, "One day I'm a hero, the next day I'm a nut." ▼

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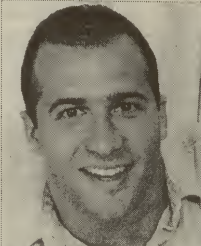
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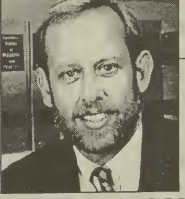
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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE NO. 243849
The following person(s) are doing business as Fastech Auto Glass, 340 Fell Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94102. This business is conducted by an individual signed Jacky K. Fong. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 09/29/2000. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/29/00.
OCT. 26, NOV. 2, 9, 16, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 316038
In The Superior Court Of The State Of California In And For The County Of San Francisco. In the matter of the Application of Greg Allen Rossoup. For Change of Name. The application of Greg Allen Rossoup, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application proposing that his name be changed to Garrett Ross. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons before this Court in Department 218 on the 7th day of December 2000, at 9:00 o'clock AM, of said day to show cause way the application for change of name should not be granted.
NOV. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2000

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME. FILE NO: 241173

The following person (persons) have abandoned the use of the fictitious business name known as: Profit Recovery Partners. Located at: 961 Lombard Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94133. The fictitious name referred to above was filed in the County of San Francisco on: 6/02/2000. This business was conducted by: a individual: Michael S. Gargan.
NOVEMBER 9, 16, 23, 30, 2000

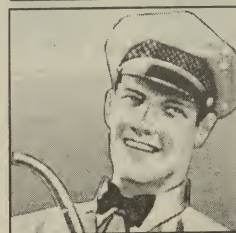
STATEMENT FILE NO. 244336
The following person(s) are doing business as: Phantom. 516 Castro Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual signed Allam N. Bitak. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/20/00.
NOV 9, 16, 23, 30, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244649
The following person(s) are doing business as: Vico's Imports. 1598 Carroll Avenue, San Francisco, Ca. 94124. This business is conducted by an individual signed Vico Piccinini. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 11/03/00. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/20/00.
NOV 9, 16, 23, 30, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244690
The following person(s) are doing business as: Orient Rugs And Carpets Of The East. 33 Pond Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual signed Gregory Scott Halbert. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/06/00.
NOV. 16, 23, 30, DEC. 7, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244060
The following person(s) are doing business as: Patterson and McCombs. 12 Geary Street, suite 201-z, San Francisco, Ca. 94108. This business is conducted by an individual signed Nancy McCombs. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 10/01/00. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 10/10/00.
NOV. 16, 23, 30, DEC. 7, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244770
The following person(s) are doing business as: Impact Multimedia Publishing. 860 Bush Street #301, San Francisco, Ca. 94108. This business is conducted by an individual signed Wilfred J. Ortiz, II. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 11/01/00. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/09/00.
NOV. 16, 23, 30, DEC. 7, 2000



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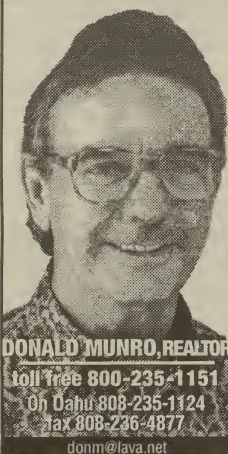
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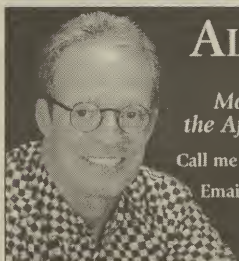
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E46

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E46

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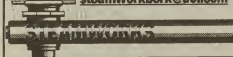
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E47

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF SAN FRANCISCO CA.
NO 315966

In the Matter of the Application of
Elizabeth Ann Jensen For Change of
Name, the application of Elizabeth Ann
Jensen for change of name, having been
filed in Court, and it appearing from said
application that Elizabeth Ann Jensen has
filed an application proposing that name be
changed to Elizabeth Ann Ryan. Now,
therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed,
that all persons in said matter do appear
before this Court in Department 218 on the
19th day of December, 2000 at 9:00
o'clock am, of said day to show cause why
the application for change of name should
not be granted.
OCT. 26, NOV. 2, 9, 16, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244354
The following person(s) are doing business
as Fulton and Baker Laundry, 1498 Fulton
Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This
business is conducted by husband and wife
signed John Stuart Fernandez and Celeste
Aguirre-Fernandez. The registrant(s)
commenced to transact business under the
above listed fictitious business name or
names on, 10/19/2000. The statement was
filed with the City and County of San Francisco,
Ca. on 10/23/00.
OCT. 26, NOV. 2, 9, 16, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244348
The following person(s) are doing business
as Los Jarritos Restaurant, 901 South Van
Ness Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94130.
This business is conducted by an individual
signed Dolores P. Reyes. The registrant(s)
commenced to transact business under the
above listed fictitious business name or
names on, 10/19/2000. The statement was
filed with the City and County of San Francisco,
Ca. on 10/20/00.
OCT. 26, NOV. 2, 9, 16, 2000

STATEMENT FILE NO. 244254
The following person(s) are doing business
as Rude Mountain, RudeMountain, Rude
Mountain Copy, 3119 20th Street, San
Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is
conducted by a corporation signed Morgan
Sowden. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed
fictitious business name or names on,
09/01/2000. The statement was filed with
the City and County of San Francisco, Ca.
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OCT. 26, NOV. 2, 9, 16, 2000

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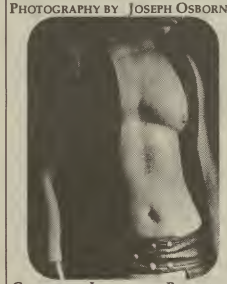
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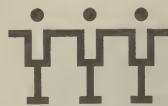
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Go gay Asian-American playwrights!
Prince Gomolvilas' 'Debunking Love,'
'Bee'; Chay Yew's 'Wonderland' debut.

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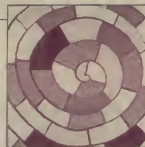
Gore for President
Vidal, that is; his new
novel is 'The Golden Age.'

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What's the Big Deal?
Visual Aid's 7th annual
art sale/exhibition.

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BAY AREA REPORTER

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Vol. 30 • No. 46 • 16 November 2000

Melissa Ferrick plays
the Last Day Saloon



Girl in constant motion

Catching up with
singer/songwriter
Melissa ferrick

by Joyce Luck

Upstairs at the Last Day Saloon, the names of artists who have passed through on gigs cover the walls like shingles lining a roof. There's everybody from local one-hit-wonder Greg Kihn to the up-and-coming Sister 7, to those who have made it, like blues legends John Lee Hooker and Etta James. The night of November 4 saw Melissa Ferrick take the venue's stage and play to a sold-out crowd, which was sweaty, dancing, and packed in close. When Ferrick's shingle goes up, where will time place her, an out singer/songwriter with a large and very loud lesbian following?

In the early 1990s, Ferrick's star rose rapidly. Morrissey caught her act and hired her to open for him. On the strength of these performances, Atlantic Records signed Ferrick, bankrolling lavish productions of *Massive Blur* (1993) and *Willing to Wait* (1995), both critically acclaimed albums. Ferrick, then 20 years old, seemed on the verge of exploding into superstardom.

But the albums didn't sell. Part of the problem was Atlantic's not promoting her aggressively, concedes Ferrick. We're sitting on the patio outside her hotel room on the Sunday afternoon following her gig at the Last Day Saloon. We're drinking decaf coffee and occasionally have to shout over the engines of planes taking off from San Francisco International. Ferrick's decked out all in black for a photo shoot scheduled for 5 p.m.

Her tour manager, Jen Perry, offers her a cigarette, hangs outside with us for a bit, then goes back inside. It's chilly out, but the hotel bar was too loud for conversation with the Niners game blaring on TV.

"It's like my career has been backwards," Ferrick continues. "I seemed to get all the opportunities at the beginning. And now I'm paying all these dues. You know what I mean? But should have been, could have been, would have been doesn't matter."

Ferrick is nowhere near bitter, despite the melancholy lines from her song "North Carolina," in which she sings of sitting in her hotel room with the television on mute, listening to the radio playing all of her money-making peers. "I take complete, full responsibility for what happened to me," she says, hunching forward, frowning, her forehead wrinkling in thought. "In hindsight, I'm sure it happened for a reason. At the time, I just didn't understand why I wasn't a rock star. I thought, 'What's wrong with everybody?'"

page <None>

Talking normal with Laurie Anderson

Anthology of Warner Bros.
recordings is out on Rhino

by Gregg Shapiro

Over the course of two discs, *Talk Normal: The Laurie Anderson Anthology* (Warner Archives/Rhino) attempts to present a concise compilation of performance artist Laurie Anderson's Warner Brothers recordings. The anthology begins with the groundbreaking single "O Superman," which was initially released independently and then found a place on her first album, and continues through the full-length discs *Big Science*, *United States Live*, *Mister Heartbreak*, *Home of the Brave*, *Strange Angels*, *Bright Red*, and *The Ugly One with the Jewels and Other Stories*. But two discs are simply not enough to contain Anderson's creative genius.

As an introduction to this artist who sings, speaks, plays violin and keyboards, and magnificently manipulates her voice and instruments in ways you'd never imagined, *Talk Normal* is a good way to get your feet wet. But I wholeheartedly recommend that you take the plunge and immerse yourself in her albums. Anderson's latest full-length studio disc will be available in spring 2001.

Gregg Shapiro: Your early work with John Giorno/Giorno Poetry Systems predates your Warn-

page <None>



SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

by Roberto Friedman
and Pat Riotic

Don't know about you, but we think **George Dubya** has looked like a Texas varmint caught in an Arkansas squirrel trap ever since the election. It doesn't take a butterfly ballot to figure out he'd probably like to go back to his nap right about now.

Out There has been finding the whole tawdry election dispiriting, and that it all came down to a few senile votes in the banana republic known as Florida ("the Sunshine State," not!), the same place which gave us **Elian Gonzalez**, **Janet Reno** and **Old Sparky**, the flamethrowing electric chair, seems especially perverse. Now Out There supposes we can only look forward to four more years of

drag queens dressed up as First Mother and "silver fox" **Barbara Bush**. Rhymes with Tush.

Maybe there are some gay boy-pups out there who don't remember the original Bush Administration — let OT remind you, they were bleak years indeed. Military crusades, recession, "1,000 points of light," "wouldn't be prudent" — give us a blowjob in the corridor behind the Oval Office any day!

Now that it seems we're living with the permanent undead presidential election, we can't help but hearken back to a time when we had leaders who possessed true pizzazz and knew how to accessorize with reptiles. That need is now being filled as Theatre Rhinoceros' **Cleopatra: The Musical** plays the cavernous and drafty Victoria Theatre. Despite atrocious reviews, the show is apparently snuggled into its bat-cave for its full five-week run.

Playwright **John Fisher** says the inspiration for his unusual take on the original queen of de Nile came from the 1963 4-hour **Liz Taylor**, **Richard Burton**, **Eddie Fisher** (Joley's dad for you young 'uns, and no relation to John) epic that featured an over-mascaraed Liz soaking in milk baths, playing with her asp, and being the first female star to command a million bucks in the process. Fisher credits La Liz as an advisor on the production, but will not say in what capacity she

participated. Caterer, perhaps? He did offer that the cast of 10 (pared down from the East Bay cast of 30) plays 50 roles, and does some very quick changes — reappearing back on stage faster than you can say fluke hubby **Larry Fortensky**.

The fluke by which it appears the GOP will steal the election involved a tricky ballot which created, in the retirement complexes of Palm Beach County, a heretofore nonexistent group which **Rep. Barney Frank** calls "Jews for Buchanan," not a happy bunch. That group would include one **Hyman Flansbaum**, an 80-year-old Holocaust

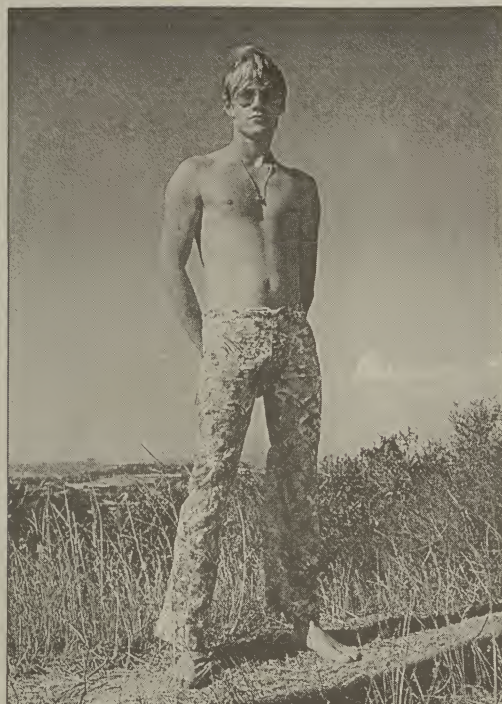
survivor whom the *NY Times* reported mistakenly cast his vote for Buchanan, a man who recently praised **Adolph Hitler's** good points.

"I hate him, I hate Pat Buchanan," said Flansbaum. "I wouldn't imagine voting for him, ever, and I didn't intend to vote for him. He upset me whenever I see him on television. I voted for him, and my vote was wasted."

Photo ops

The gruesome holiday season is nip-nip-nipping at our heels, and a young man's fancy turns lightly to thoughts of photography books. All of the following are vouchsafed suitable solstice gifts for that special pervers in your life:

Art critic and photographer **Edward Lucie Smith's** *Flesh &*



Jimmy Stone, Topanga Canyon After Wildfire, 1971, by Mel Roberts

Stone is newly out from Ipso Facto. In it, he juxtaposes images of the male nude in classical sculpture with male nudes in the flesh. The fun is to guess which is which, a game that will appeal to the Hellenists and the genital sleuths among us.

Karlheinz Weinberger: Photos 1954-1995 (Andreas Züst Verlag) — Weinberger began to record biker culture in the 1950s, and he's been following it with his camera ever since. He was also one of the first German postwar photographers to make homoerotic gay culture, and his eye for young men is amply demonstrated here.

Mel Roberts, California Boys, Photographs from the 1960s and 1970s (FotoFactory Press) — Vintage beefcake photos of classic West Coast types, in almost hallucinatory Day-Glo color prints. If pompadours pumping in posing straps are your thing, you'll find many an appealing California boy — and his pudenda — here.

James Spada, Black & White Men (Pond Street Press) — When last we mentioned Spada in these pages, he had published a picture bio of **Jackie O**. Now he is back with erotic black-and-white photography of black-and-white men. Out There would eat any one of them with a spoon.

Don't cry for them

While *BAR* arts writer **Will Shank** and his partner **U.B.** were visiting Argentina last month on your tax dollar (the Department of State sent Shank to tour museums with US Embassy personnel in Buenos Aires, Rosario and La

Plata, and to talk about taking care of contemporary art), they not only visited dictator moll **Evita Peron's** grave (twice!), but they also brought back a rare musical souvenir.

Not far from the bins filled with hundreds of recordings by famed tango singer **Carlos Gardel** in a downtown Buenos Aires Tower Records store, Shank ferreted out a CD featuring **Augustín Magaldi**, immortalized by schmaltzmeister **Andrew Lloyd Weber** with the lyrics, "You might as well be the one who discovered her/ You'll never be remembered for your voice." Shank says the real-life Magaldi is actually not so bad.

Her cups runneth over

Our favorite correction in a recent issue of the *New York Times*: "An article in *The Times Magazine* last Sunday about **Ivana Trump** and her spending habits misstated the number of bras she buys. It is two dozen black, two dozen beige and two dozen white, not two thousand of each." Thanks for clearing that up, we were having nonstop lingerie nightmares.

If only it were that easy

You know, we receive a lot of out-there publicity here at the Out There desk. But this is from what was undoubtedly the press release of the month:

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page 28 ►

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THEATRE

The artist currently known as Prince

by Richard Dodds

As a gay Thai-American playwright, Prince Gomolvilas isn't lost in a sea of similarly described scribes. In fact, matters of gay and straight aside, he's the only Thai-American that he knows about who is actively pursuing a career as a playwright.

This can be a doubled-edged quill, closing doors at mainstream theaters but opening them to stages interested in expanding their cultural consciousness. Yet things have been going well enough for the 28-year-old San Francisco resident that he plans to quit his day job in January to devote all his energies to playwrighting. "I don't think it's very risky," he said during a break from his soon-to-be former job as associate editor at *Callboard* magazine. "If I chart the progress of my career, it has improved as the years have progressed, and it's definitely on an upward slope. Commissions and royalties should be enough to keep me afloat."

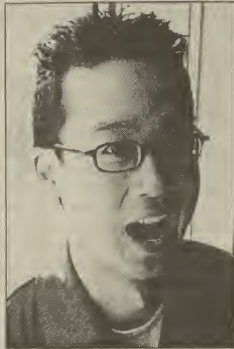
While his plays *The Theory of Everything* and *Big Hunk o' Burnin' Love* have been performed in New York, Los Angeles, Virginia, and Singapore, only now is Gomolvilas seeing one of his full-length plays in production in San Francisco. Actually, make that two plays.

The New Conservatory Theatre Center is continuing its Pride season of gay-themed plays with the world premiere of *Debunking Love*, opening Nov. 18. And in March, the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre is producing Gomolvilas' *Bee*, a play it commissioned for its season of African-American-themed plays.

In both plays, the central character is gay and Asian, interacting with white American culture in *Debunking Love* and black American culture in *Bee*. Either way, Asian Americans have been a rare presence in contemporary drama, something that Gomolvilas has made it his mission to redress.

"My first five plays were very non-ethnic specific," he said. "And they were also heterosexual. I guess you could call them nice plays. I had to work through two layers of self-hatred, being Asian American and gay, which both started becoming important to me at the same time."

Gomolvilas, whose given name is Khamolpat, spent his first seven years in Indianapolis before his parents relocated to Southern California. Born and raised in Thailand, his parents quickly adapted to the United States. "My parents know American suburban cul-



Playwright Prince Gomolvilas

ture," he said. "That's where they take their cues."

For Gomolvilas, that once meant assimilating away from his Asian heritage while denying his gayness. *Debunking Love* deals with the former issue, while *Bee* examines the latter.

The title of *Bee* plays off the bee's black and yellow stripings as it looks at the relationship between an invisible gay Korean-American man and the older African-American woman

who is the only person who can see him.

"They're looking for a cure to his invisibility," Gomolvilas said, "which seems to have something to do with his mother's rejection of his homosexuality."

It is a situation, Gomolvilas acknowledged, inspired by his own uneasy relationship with his mother when it comes to his gayness. Gomolvilas didn't come out until he was 24, and he gives credit to his move to San Francisco for facilitating the process.

In *Debunking Love*, the central character is an Asian American writer with dating problems. The other two characters — another Asian American and a Caucasian American — are part of his romantic problems, and also serve as voices of conscience pulling him toward his obligations to the Asian American community and to the gay community.

It also addresses the topic of rice queens and potato queens. "There are many varying opinions about exclusive dating," Gomolvilas said. "I'm not there to preach but to open a dialogue."

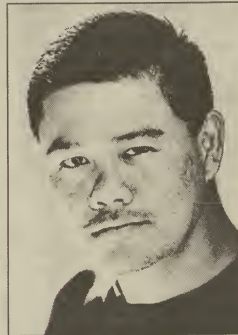
Gomolvilas calls *Debunking Love* a romantic comedy with an ironically cynical title about love. "I am hopeful about love," he said. "But I'm not seeing anyone now. I went through two traumatic breakups, and that's enough for one year."

Debunking Love will run at

NCTC through Jan. 6. Call 861-8972 for more information.

Asia major

If Prince Gomolvilas is a *rara avis* as a gay Asian-American playwright, he is not alone. Chay Yew is another rising star, albeit one with a little more mileage on him. His play *A Language of Their Own*, a modern classic of gay Asian-American theater, was featured in last season's Playwrights In Danger Festival at the Magic Theatre. His new play, *Wonderland*, is the opening production in the



Playwright Chay Yew

Magic's *Plays at the Border* new play festival.

Wonderland looks at a Chinese-American family living in Southern California with their American dreams in conflict with unfortunate realities. The family includes a disillusioned architect, his wife who imagines an America that she has seen in the movies, and their son who is struggling with sexual, racial, and cultural identity issues.

Staged readings of Yew's play will take place at the Magic at 8:30 p.m. Nov. 30 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 10. Call 441-8822 for more information.

Touched by an angel

Rodgers and Hart thought they were writing a movie musical for Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald, but when MGM pulled the plug, *I Married an Angel* became a Broadway musical instead. Ironically, when Eddy and MacDonald made a movie based on the 1938 Broadway show four years later, it was a major flop.

But fortunately, along with a score that includes "Spring Is Here" and "At the Roxy Music Hall," the Broadway script has survived, and it is notably superior to many of the dim-witted librettos

of other 1930s musicals. Still, it is not often produced, which makes it a prime candidate for the 42nd Street Moon treatment. In fact, the production opening Nov. 29 at the Eureka Theatre is 42nd Street Moon's second visit to *I Married an Angel*.

Greg MacKellan is directing the comic fantasy about a bored playboy who vows never to marry any woman who is less than "an angel from heaven." He gets his wish, but his new bride's heavenly perfection and unflinching honesty prove troublesome in the real world. The problems are ironed out when the playboy's brash sister steps in to instruct the angel in earthly ways.

Lesley Hamilton is repeating the role of the sister that she played in 42nd Street Moon's 1995 production. Martin Lewis, another 42nd Street Moon regular, is playing the playboy, and Marina Torres is his angelic bride.

I Married an Angel is the final production in 42nd Street Moon's 2000 season of staged concert versions of "lost" musicals. For more information call 788-1125. ▼

Richard Dodds can be reached at BARstage@aol.com.



Backstage

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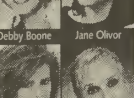
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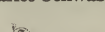
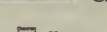
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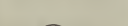
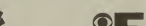
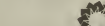
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Suzan Kendall as Twyla in *June Bug Music*, at the Magic Theatre

Holler hideaway

Eastenders Rep Co.'s 'June Bug Music'

by Richard Dodds

It's taken Charles E. Polly three plays to come to grips with the Tackett family of Three Mile Holler in hardscrabble Kentucky, which may be one — or two — plays too many.

I can't be sure of that, since I have seen only the second installment, *Twyla's Story*, and the concluding *June Bug Music*, now at the Magic Theatre under the auspices of Eastenders Repertory Company. But I had a definite sense of déjà vu as many of the same characters once again played out their same love-hate family relationships.

June Bug Music does deal more directly with gay issues and relationships that were kept more peripheral in the second part of the trilogy. In the new play, we meet the current and late lovers of Ervin Tackett, who has found a life as a writer in Berkeley far from the poverty, ignorance, and homo-

phobia of his hometown. He may run but he cannot hide. "Kentucky is part of who you are," he is told. "You'll never be done with it."

Both Parts I and II center on Ervin's visits home to Three Mile Holler, where his gayness, his HIV status, and his big-city ways make him something of a pariah in this land of dialogue filled with over-ripe down-home poetry. His mother, who is under treatment for cancer when *June Bug Music* opens, has tried to open her mind, but it will only budge so far, and Ervin's sister-in-law and niece don't really want him around. Yet for all their protestations about how disruptive Ervin is, we don't really see that in this passively reactive character.

If Polly does not develop the drama of the Tackett family into a bracing whole, he captures it in individual scenes where the characters can surprise us with their complex but believable responses.

There are in fact 17 individual scenes that jump between Three

Mile Holler and Berkeley, and between the past and the present. Some brief scenes seem to just peter away, which would work better if, in director Susan E. Evans' generally strong and well-acted production, they flowed together rather than stopped for blackouts and scenery rearrangements.

The one constant through all three plays has been Suzan Kendall's imposing performance as Twyla, the Tackett matriarch who is nearing her end. Kendall has a sure grip on this cantankerous but loving character, and she can wrap her voice with ease around the honeyed rural accents and speeches.

The engagingly feisty Marnie Levee is playing Ervin's outspoken niece, and Michaela Greeley effectively handles the role of her hardened mother. Valda Claire plays the spirit of Twyla's cold, withholding mother with icy skill. Benedict Ives and Eric Lamothe ably play Ervin's boyfriends, past and present.

Polly himself is playing Ervin in this outing, and his wide downturned mouth creates a character of a permanently melancholy countenance. It's easy to imagine that the *Twyla* plays flow from Polly's experiences and heart. But what the performance may gain in authenticity, it loses in polish. ▼

June Bug Music will run through Nov. 19 at the Magic Theatre. Tickets are \$18 and \$20. Call (510) 434-0734.

Out There

◀ page 26

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Publicists make the world go 'round

Thanks to *NY Times* "Compressed Data" columnist **Barnaby J. Feder** for calling our attention to the hot Whack-a-Flack website (www.whackaflack.com), so popular among beat reporters and the p.r. people who solicit them.

Feder spells out the site's appeal for the non-media-impaired: "Flack" — short for flack catcher — may be the most derisive printable word that journalists use to describe public relations people. Whack-a-Flack is a simple arcade-style game on the Internet that allows the player to nail flacks with their own poorly conceived news releases, folded into paper airplanes.

One fictional target, for example: **Prentice Newman**, described as "fresh out of school and raring to go. He just sent you 3 e-mails with 6 press releases featuring 9 story ideas. He returns your call before you've hung up the phone. He's everywhere. He's an evil clone."

Of course, Out There has just oodles of patience with the Prentices of this world, and suggests that if our fellow ink-stained wretches are unduly annoyed with their well-meaning p.r. brethren, a critical attitude adjustment is in store — meet us at our satellite office in the Lone Star Saloon. ▼

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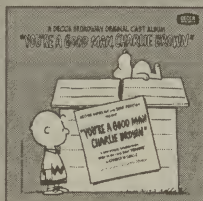
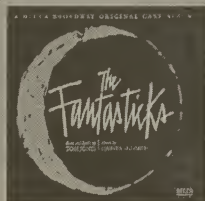


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DANCE & MUSIC

High Pech

Lawrence Pech Dance Co. at YBC

by Aimée Ts'ao

Sometimes going to review dance premieres is akin to betting on horses at Golden Gate Fields. You know the choreographers' track records, you have a few hunches about what the outcome might be, and then you have to ask yourself, are you willing to lay money on them? Had I been able to wager on the all-premieres program performed by the Lawrence Pech Dance Company at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts last weekend, I would have had the satisfaction of correctly predicting the results. Avoiding the losers is just as important as picking the winners.

The evening opened with Lawrence Pech's *Chaverot*, accompanied by a live chamber ensemble playing Felix Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* as arranged by Michael Schroeder. Five women in diaphanous white Grecian tunics gracefully wove their way together and in smaller groups through Pech's carefully crafted choreography. I don't think we really need another "white ballet," and the considerable talents of the dancers could be put to better use in something less trite and more tailored to their individual talents. It's a pleasant but ultimately forgettable piece that has a fine compositional

sense without the daring to forge into new territory.

The Habitat, choreographed by Cynthia Pepper to an original commissioned score by Robert Vieira, is an eclectic mish-mash of Alwin Nikolais stretch fabric, Trockadero men in skirts, and generic '50s modern dance. While the quality of the costumes, lighting and sets offset the lack of choreographic vocabulary and compositional development to some extent, Pepper is out of her league on this program of ballets by more sophisticated and astute choreographers.

Tight package

After intermission, a tightly composed pas de deux, *Already Dusk* by Val Caniparoli for Wendy Van Dyck and James Strong, debuted. Using the Adagio affettuoso from Brahms' Sonata No. 2 for Cello and Piano, Caniparoli contrasts the romantic lyricism of the music with far more modern and angular movements for the dancers. He has developed his own language of steps that were then recombined in numerous ways and embroidered upon. Watching Caniparoli's evolution as a choreographer, from the restaging of his 1995 *Bow Out* by the Oakland Ballet, also last weekend, to *Slow* for the San Francisco Ballet a few seasons back, to this piece, one sees his ability to set

choreographic challenges and then solve them through a variety of ways, but always with his unique vision. *Already Dusk* could use a bit more passion and an abandon that was lacking on opening night, perhaps due to caution and nerves.

And the last shall be the first. So it was with the closing ballet of this program, Julia Adam's *The Shroud*. Adam has a way of taking the audience into other worlds that can seem familiar and at the same time alien or distorted. She did it with *Night* for the San Francisco Ballet, and now she has done it again. Using traditional medieval folk songs provided the known element, but because they are not from our ordinary frame of reference, the folk songs cast an otherworldly light on the whole piece.

Time felt suspended, as the steps and costumes belonged to a different era from the music. Beginning with a spotlit, handkerchief-sized piece of fabric on the floor center stage, and ending with the entire stage under an enormous white cloth, Adam took us on a journey from childhood's playful innocence through to the end of life. Along the way, human relationships were explored, as the piece of fabric grew larger and larger each time it reappeared on stage. But Adam hasn't yet learned to incorporate movements originating with the torso, and that tends to give her work a very balletic, stiff-backed timbre. ▼



Walter Swarthout

Wendy Van Dyck and Lawrence Pech in Val Caniparoli's *Already Dusk*

Distracting and bland batons

Youthful conductors, star soloists at Davies Hall

by Philip Campbell

Two relatively youthful conductors have taken the podium at Davies Hall recently, though the results have been far from fresh or stimulating. The presence of two powerhouse soloists helped save both concerts from total mediocrity, but even some off-beat programming could not generate much excitement.

The San Francisco Symphony debut of Emmanuel Villaume was anticipated mainly due to his recent appointment as Music Director of the highly regarded Spoleto Festival USA. He has previously conducted opera here without much ado, and most of his conducting chores in the past have kept him in the orchestra pits of the Bastille, Los Angeles, Santa Fe and Dallas Operas. He has also led opera orchestras in concert, but judging from his highly distracting baton style, it might be best if he continued mostly to be heard and not seen.

Villaume is a physically appealing presence, and his buzzed head makes him right at home in San Francisco, but his insistence on cueing everyone on-stage with his baton hand while sawing mechanically with his left makes watching him something of a chore. His French birthright seems to have given him a more intellectual rather than sensual approach to music.

Claude Debussy's *The Afternoon of a Faun*, which opened the program, was robbed of any languorous appeal, despite the well-played contribution from flutist Paul Renzi.

Intellect would seem to be the order of the day for Hans Werner Henze's *Compases para preguntas ensimismadas: Music for Viola and Twenty-Two Players*. The title of this intriguing work, receiving its first SFS performances, can be interpreted two ways. The composer favors "Meters for Questions Absorbed in Self-Contemplation," but others have given it a warmer spin with "Questions Asked of One's Soul." Whatever the best interpretation may be, the piece itself displays Henze at his thorny best.

Henze creates a sound world by stacking notes and instruments vertically, while the apparent soloist (here, the Symphony's well-loved violist Geraldine Walther) attempts an anchoring position. The effect is fascinating, if typically cerebral. Henze is known for his passionate left-wing politics, and he is a revered personality in Europe, but most of his music remains dauntingly complex and unemotional.

Walther gave it her considerable best, and all the demands placed by the composer on the other players (comic Anna Russell might have called them "unnatural acts") were met with precision

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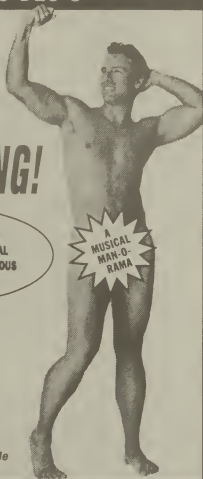
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Cher's not commercial

Glam priestess releases Internet album

by John R. Killacky

Pop culture's uber-diva, Cher, is at it again: guesting on *Will and Grace*, producing a fashion makeover pilot, negotiating with ABC to star in *Mame*, as well as remaking the 1924 film *The Enchanted Cottage*. Musically, she's charting new terrain as she releases *not.com.mercial*, an album only available through her Internet site, www.cher.com. Unlike her techno smash *Believe*, the new collection features stripped down arrangements of songs actually written by Cher, marking the first time she has recorded her own material so extensively.

She began work on the disc in 1994 while attending a songwriting workshop in France, penning ten songs in as many days. Back in the States, she then spent a week with David Letterman's band recording eight of the songs. Two others not written by Cher were later added. She pulled one of them from her archives, "Classified 1A," a Sonny Bono song from 1971 that received almost no radio play the first time around because it is about a dying soldier in Vietnam.

Even in a career built on unorthodoxy, Cher's Internet release is still unusual for a major recording artist who can still sell records. In fact, the project was shelved for years because her longtime label, Warner Brothers, deemed it "not commercial" enough to promote. Cher told the *Los Angeles Times*, "I don't have any expectations. I did it for myself. I'm just sharing it with other people who might be interested and don't really care what reviewers think."

Autobiographical themes include her feelings about homelessness, in "Our Lady of San Francisco"; recalling a visit to her grandfather in a veteran's hospital, "Fit To Fly"; and her own pattern of ending relationships, "Runnin'." Her personal favorite is "The Fall Kurt's Blues," which she wrote after hearing of Kurt Cobain's suicide: "Well the good news, if there's any/ is you ever lived at all/ but our country kills its heroes/we just raise them for the fall."

Cher's more recent converts will miss the synthesized pulsating rhythms of her dancefloor tunes, since the album harkens back to a soft-rock sound reminiscent of her '70s style of story songs. Melodically, the compositions are a bit naive. Vocally, however, her glorious vibrato-laden timbre is still there, most eloquently in the soulful ballad "With or Without You" and the acoustic "Our Lady of San Francisco." Also powerful is the stirring "Sisters of Mercy," a musical exorcism of her time spent in a Catholic orphanage.

In releasing *not.com.mercial*, Cher surprises us once again with a heartfelt, deeply personal collection. Our priestess of glam ushers us into a more intimate and vulnerable side. For those wanting a more over-the-top version of her reality, the icon reminds us that this Internet-only offer should not be considered the follow-up to her multiple-platinum-selling *Believe*. She's currently in the studio, overdubbing that project for a planned March 2001 off-line commercial release. Stay tuned! ▼

Cher appears on NBC's *Will & Grace* Thursday, November 16.



Cher on *not.com.mercial*: 'I don't have any expectations.'

Thrice Spice

The Spice Girls' 'Forever'

by Alex Robertson Textor

When popular music in 1990s is decently reckoned with, there will have to be a serious chapter devoted to the reign of pop ushered into existence in the summer of 1996 by the Spice Girls. The Spice Girls helped create a culture of receptivity to the pure pop made today by boy bands, Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears and the rest. If you hold the Spice Girls responsible for the fact that 98 Degrees got a record deal and eventually made that hideous Spanglish song, then they've got something to answer for.

But before you do that and, to boot, feel superior to legions of less sophisticated music fans around the world, at least recognize that the Spice Girls co-author all their music and had a significant hand in constructing the phenomenon they became. While you're at it, notice how those first two albums differed, markedly, from the ultrapop that has followed in subsequent years.

The Spice Girls' first two albums are characterized by a hodgepodge of pop songs, some fab and others kind of bland. They're glossy songs, but they're not overproduced and micro-managed like the boy bands and the Britneys of 2000. This is what makes their just-released third album *Forever* (Virgin) so interesting. This time around, they have made a glossily micro-managed album, with little left to chance. Perhaps this is a reaction

to the changing terrain of pop music; perhaps it's their defensive reaction to having taken a significant 23-month break from releasing any material at all.

For most US consumers, the Spice Girls have been in hibernation for almost two years. Outside of North America, all four of the remaining Spice Girls have embarked on solo careers. Each has done quite successfully, with Mel C (previously known as Sporty) achieving the most critical and material success. For an American audience, the return of the Spice Girls yields a radically transformed quartet. The cover of *Forever* shows the Girls completely divorced from their monikers, all morphed into a hybrid Modified Posh Spice.

Knob-twiddling

Forever relies heavily on the co-writing and knob-twiddling talents of Rodney Jerkins' team and Minneapolis geniuses Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. It's a pop album with a distinct R&B bent. The Spice Girls remain within this R&B-lite territory throughout *Forever*. "Holler," the album's lead single, offers a good example of their new direction. Reminiscent of recent hits by Destiny's Child and Pink, "Holler" is a smooth and streamlined tune.

As seamless as it is, it's curious that "Holler" was the first release choice. There are much stronger tracks on the album. *Forever* features some shockingly good songs, the driving "Tell Me Why" and party tune "If You Wanna

next page ►

MUSIC

Brothers, can you spare a song?

by Bob Findle

In a world numbed into an aural coma by blanderized pap, those of us who know their music shouldn't keep The Aluminum Group, brothers Frank and John Navin, a secret. Although they say they don't mind being a word-of-mouth group.

"That is a joy for Frank and me," says John. "I think it's special that somebody might listen to us, like it and then pass it on to a friend. It's grassroots. That is a beautiful thing in itself. But I am not going to lie, I would like more people to know about us."

Pelo, The Aluminum Group's latest release on their new label Hefty Records, is more of the Navins' smooth, nuanced sounds, velvet vocals and intimate, thoughtful lyrics.

John says of *Pelo* and previous



Brothers Frank (left) and John (right) Navin of The Aluminum Group.

albums *Pedals*, *Plano* and *Wonder Boys*: "The criteria is not to duplicate, but to make each CD some-

thing we are proud of."

The Navin brothers' work has been compared to the pop mastery of Burt Bacharach. I first thought of them as being in the vein of The Style Council's complexity, but less frantic than Paul Weller can be at times. Lyrics are reminiscent of the Pet Shop Boys, early Everything but the Girl, and Morrissey, during and after The Smiths.

The 10-track *Pelo* takes a couple of listens to fully grasp. So much vibe and quiet beat are synopocating in the background, they can be elusive. Considerably more instrumental than previous releases (the trancey, almost 6-minute "Good-bye Goldfish, Hi Piranha" has a scant 30 seconds of vocals from Sally Timms), the

tight production adds not a guitar strum too many nor an extra organ chord to bog down the often seamless transitions from track to track.

The best examples of this are the three "relationship" songs "Worrying Kind," "Satellite" and "Cannot Make You Out." Almost a suite, the three pieces feature Frank and John, along with Timms and Amy Warren, trading vocals and harmonizing. The women's sophisticated higher vocal registers complement the guys' equally cultured baritones like clear wine and smoky cheese.

M4M melodies

Going back to *Plano*, you can hear the progression of the Navin sound. Mostly love songs ranging from happy-together to sad-you're-gone, it is sweet to hear words of male-for-male affection overlaying hard-to-forget melodies. "Sugar & Promises," "Sunday Morning" and "Chocolates" take up residence in your brain and refuse to leave. "Star Wish" is the standout for me, with a rich, flowing vocal by Frank and close harmonies by John. It is followed by "Photograph," another pleaser with a gently tumbling vocal.

Pedals moves the sound into a more arty tone. Suave vocals; clever lyrics dotted with mentions of treasures such as fortune cookies, Valley of the Dolls, artist Marcel Duchamp and author Thomas Hardy; and the occasional banjo or saxophone accent all make this CD work like a soundtrack to a 10-act show. The three- and four-

minute "dramas" all come from the Navins' fertile minds. Love here is urban, and its workings variant and sometimes weary-making.

Plano is an FM feast; *Pedals*, a salon offering; and *Pelo*, a pop-laced progressive musical haiku.

Frank offers an explanation for page 36 ►

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The Spice Girls: Victoria, Melanie C, Melanie B, and Emma

Spice Girls

◀ previous page

Have Some Fun" chief among them. They're classics right off the bat, and it remains to be seen if radio can overcome its anti-Spice bias to give these songs airplay once they are released as singles.

The closest thing on *Forever* to a classic Spice anthem is "Right Back at Ya," which features an obligatory Mel B rap. "Right Back" is anchored by a swirling staccato reminiscent of late-1980s Miami girl group Exposé. The warped beats opening and closing "Get Down with Me" render its otherwise routine disco noteworthy. "Let Love Lead the Way" is a slowly burning ballad, simple but convincing. Another ballad, "Oxygen," is perhaps the most mature song the Spice Girls have yet attempted, bearing more similarity to a Vanessa Williams torch song than to previous Spice Girls ballads.

Forever is bookended by great songs and falters only in the middle, with three songs in succession ("Wasting My Time," "Weekend Love" and the aggressively mediocre ballad "Time Goes By") that do little. The album ends with "Goodbye," the Spice Girls' last single, originally released in December 1998. "Goodbye," a Christ-massy farewell to quivering turncoat Ginger, is a song of the vanquished Spice type, without a deftly anchoring groove. It hints backwards in time even as it closes

es the album.

Occasionally, there are some embarrassing moments on *Forever*. It's strange to hear Spice lyrics based in American vernacular, especially since one of the most interesting things about their earlier material has been how *English* their spoken rap intervals sounded. No one will ever mistake Mel B's northern drawl for an American voice, so lyrics like "You say you want me back, it's a simple fact/ Darkchild and all my girls got my back like that" seem weak at best.

The Spice Girls are trying to lay claim to new, adultish territory. Their euphemisms are less mystified these days. That said, there's a unadulterated girl-power advocacy here, overlapping lyrically with their first two albums. And despite the fact that the Spice Girls have left their UK production teams behind, these songs share arrangement style and detail with their earlier work. Clearly, the Spice Girls have molded their producers to their ends.

Whether *Forever* can maintain the Spice Girls' significance as they evolve from cartoons to adult women remains to be seen. The inexplicable magic that lifted the Spice Girls into their own stratosphere of iconicity is gone, but then it's incredibly rare for any pop star to rein that magic in and redirect it through a third album. These matters aside, *Forever* is a solid and occasionally stunning effort, not quite formulaic yet not exactly experimental. ▼

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Invoking the timeless

Nonesuch releases Glass' Symphony #5

by Michael McDonagh

At first glance, or in this case listen, Philip Glass' Symphony #5 *Requiem, Bardo, Nirmanakaya* (1998-99) seems like a piece that continues the grand 19th-century musical tradition of big works taking on big subjects. It does, after all, call for huge performing forces — 5 vocal soloists (soprano, mezzo, tenor, bass, bass-baritone), girls' chorus, large mixed chorus, in addition to an orchestra of about 80 — and it's in 12 movements and lasts 100 uninterrupted minutes. But the 5th's musical and philosophic point of view is thoroughly contemporary, because it draws the texts for its book from 5,000 years of this planet's sacred "wisdom"

traditions, and seeks to find unity by blending them together and setting them all in one language (English) so that they speak in a single global-universal voice.

This can't have been an easy task for either Glass or the Very Reverend James Parks Morton and Kusumita K. Pedersen, who found and combined sources as disparate as the Bible, the Koran, the Mayan Popul Vuh, a Japanese Noh play, the Tibetan Book of the Dead, Zuni and African myths, the Bhagavad Gita and the Buddhist saint Shantideva. But the scope of this piece wouldn't matter if it failed to please the ear, engage the mind and touch the heart, and its success in doing all three of these puts it on a par with the Verdi, Brahms and Faure requiems, which speak to the listen-

er in both intimate and communal terms.

Glass' "message" here is that we should strive for the common good of all beings, and this certainly hit home when I heard the Brooklyn Philharmonic perform the 5th at BAM on the eve of Yom Kippur, when Israel and her neighbors were at war. Dennis Russell Davies conducted that performance, and he leads the new 2-CD Nonesuch set with the orchestra which gave the work's triumphant premiere at the Salzburg Festival last year, the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. It's stunning, richly detailed, and very moving, too.

But that's hardly surprising, because Davies has been closely involved with Glass' music for over 20 years, and their mutual experience in the theatre shows. Glass keeps him busy by continually altering the work's shape and scale with solos, duos, trios and quintets — there's even a quasi-madrigal at one point — and using the chorus singly or in mixed configurations, supported by the orchestra's rich and complex textures.

Swirling figures

The composer's vocal settings are also extremely close to the spoken rhythms of American English — correct, yet heightened according to his expressive needs. And that starts at the very beginning, where the girls' and women's chorus enter chiming, "There was



Philip Glass' message is that we should strive for the common good.

neither non-existence nor existence then," over swirling figures in muted strings. The mixed chorus comes in at "Darkness was hidden by darkness in the beginning," and, with a sudden pull-back in tempo, the male chorus dramatically sings, "Desire came upon That One in the beginning," the vocal and instrumental colors here being light and fluid as Mozart. Plus, the music has tremendous drive.

Glass' writing here and throughout is an object lesson in how to build a piece by controlling its component parts — metric, harmonic, vocal and instrumental — so that it flows with inevitable ease. And though both rhythms and textures are sometimes complex, they always feel right, as in the stunningly dramatic Movement 6, "Evil and Ignorance," and 10, "Judgment and Apocalypse."

The score also has its sensuous side, particularly in 5, "Love and Joy," where the mezzo (the right-on-target Denyce Graves) gets two seductive yet elegiac solos — the first a poem by the Persian Rumi about an expectant lover, the second a Bengali Indian poem addressed to a lover, the vocal line descending and ascending in each half. Glass' setting is almost religious in tone, because the object of worship in both these cultures was spoken to as if they were a god (Glass does a similar thing in Akhnaten and Nefertiti's love duet in his 1984 opera *Akhnaten*.)

Another sensuous aspect of the 5th is Glass' masterful scoring for every instrumental choir, and some of the most effective and

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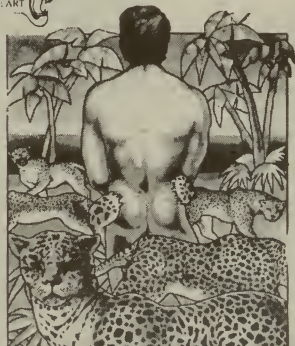
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MUSIC

Laurie Anderson

◀ Arts cover

er Brothers albums. You did an album for them called *You're The Guy I Want To Share my Money with*.

Laurie Anderson: Oh, yeah. I think we're dancing around with canes on the cover or something like that.

Yes, on the back cover. What was it like being the heterosexual woman working with openly gay Giorno and William S. Burroughs on that album?

I didn't see them that way, so much. Burroughs, I guess, I saw as this incredibly warped grandfather, the one I wished I'd always had. Although when I met him, he thought I was a boy. It was dark. It was backstage. Anyone could make the mistake. My hair was short. So we talked for a while. I was also harmonizing my voice in this particular thing, so I kind of [lowering her voice a few octaves] sounded like that. Although I don't know how he figured out I could then have a very high voice as soon as I came onstage. As I said, it was dark. I think we had a long conversation before he realized that I was not a boy, actually.

What did you think of Burroughs?

I admired him tremendously. In thinking back to that certain time, I don't think that any of the

borders were very strict — work-wise, sexual-wise. I mean, in other words, there were a lot of us who were doing stuff in music and sculpture. We would do sculpture one day and music the next day. Everybody kind of dressed more or less the same. The art-workers.

Do you feel as if the spoken work that you did helped to lay the groundwork for Poetry Slam and the poetry scene explosion?

Well, that would be very flattering, but I'm really not an historian and I don't know how to trace things like that. As much as I

from other artists was the same way that other people learned from me as well. How that happened I don't know!

How involved were you in the selection of the material for *Talk Normal*?

The people at Rhino did the selection and I was incredibly grateful, because I can't listen to the stuff. I mean it would have been incredibly daunting and I would have been miserable. To think, "Let's do an anthology. What would you want in it?" It would probably take me about

"If someone in a radio station says, 'Let's listen to some of your old music,' I say, 'Fine, as long as I can take my headphones off and leave the room.' And I do that because I find it unbearable."

know about what they were doing at that time, in the late '80s, it seemed very different from what I was doing at the time, in that it was more poetry. I started out, at any rate, doing more long stories and political commentary. I'm probably not a good person to ask about it because I don't have an overview of the scene. But I'm sure that the way that I learned

three years, mostly because I would avoid listening to it. This is the first time I heard this stuff since I mixed it. If someone in a radio station says, "Let's listen to some of your old music," I say, "Fine, as long as I can take my headphones off and leave the room." And I do that because I find it unbearable. I hear every single mixed note that's wrong. You'd think you forget that stuff. You remember it in detail, and it's just torture. I think, "I should remix that." And then I think, "But you can't remix that."

Did it feel odd to be releasing an anthology that would be representative of your work? It's only been 20 years since the Warner Brothers albums came out. Does it feel strange to be thinking in terms of a career retrospective?

No. I guess because I'm initially from the art world, and people were having retrospectives of their first three years of work. "Early-mid-career retrospective."

What does that mean? It means collection. But it was retrospective for me, because I listened to the roughs and actually enjoyed it. It maybe partly had to do with, I couldn't fix it now, it was way too late. You can imagine seeing a scrapbook of yourself for the very first time. Going through time like that. It was very, very eerie. I'm much more familiar and much less familiar than most people listening to this stuff. As the person who did it, I remember certain things about it, but I wasn't really able to enjoy it. This I actually listened to and enjoyed. It's kind of embarrassing. "Well, it's Saturday



Michael Ochs Archives

'Ultimately I find most things pointless and absurd.'

night, why don't we listen to some of my records?"

You're making me laugh, and that leads to the next question. Can you please say something about the value of humor in your work?

Well, it's the same as in my life. It saves situations, because ultimately I find most things pointless and absurd. And rather than shoot myself, I try find a balance. Actually, it's not true if you laugh, it goes away, obviously. But there is something about humor that makes things a little bit less so-called real than they seemed before. Or solid or unchangeable.

I understand that you are going into the studio to work on your next album.

It's done. We're starting to mix it. It's coming out on Nonesuch. I was hoping for a February release, but I guess April.

Will you be touring in support of the new album?

I think so. I haven't decided yet what that will be. I know that it won't be a big multimedia thing.

Are there any creative collaborations with Lou Reed on the new album?

He played on a few songs, yeah.

Since this interview is taking place after this very historic and

strange presidential election, and we still don't really know who the newly elected President is, is there anything that you would like to say on that subject?

Boy. I didn't realize how much it meant to me, really, until I woke up yesterday not knowing. I just thought, "Oh, it's just gonna be one of these guys, and I don't like either one of them, so what." And then I realized it might be George, and then I got scared. I hadn't reacted that way until the bottom line, and then you have to spend four years being led by someone who I don't think has much feeling for others, as much as he talks about how he does.

As an artist, you must also feel some concern about Dick Cheney's wife, who has been very outspoken on ending the NEA.

That tends to be a pretty Republican thing to do. I remember when Reagan appointed Charlton Heston, for a six-month reign, to run the NEA. His mission was to dismantle it. I think there's a lot of suspicion and hostility towards artists, coming from that side of the political spectrum. Whether they're talking about kids' morality or wasted tax dollars, it's the same thing. It's something that's out of their control, and they are interested in controlling how people think. And they would rather that people not think that much. ▼



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European landmarks

'Les Bonnes Femmes,' 'Eva,' 'Il Grido' out on DVD

by Gary Morris

DVD has become the pre-eminent forum for high-art cinema on video, and the trend shows no sign of letting up. Cinephiles who could previously only dream of seeing, much less owning, crisp copies of films like Chabrol's *Les Bonnes Femmes* or Losey's legendary *Eva* can now satisfy their fetish thanks to companies such as Kino, which has released fine versions of these two films along with a third, Antonioni's *Il Grido*, in a handy three-pack under the collective title *Rare Treasures of European Cinema*.



That Chabrol's *Les Bonnes Femmes* (1960), one of the landmarks of the *nouvelle vague*, never received an official release in the United States is surprising considering the film's many sensational elements. Loads of "exotic" (Parisian) location-shooting; heavy-breathing scenes in a French grindhouse; a racy and violent pool scene; plenty of casual sex and tease; and the murder of a beautiful naïf should have assured some domestic box-office. But an almost Hitchcockian feel of implacable fate that colors the film must have given exhibitors second

thoughts, and it's mostly known only to Chabrol fanatics.

The film's subtle inversion of "la dolce vita" — and of all those old Hollywood movies of young girls coming of age in the big city — makes it well worth the watch. More a series of interludes than a linear plot, *Les Bonnes Femmes* turns a pitiless eye on male-female relationships in an increasingly fractured world. The "good women" of the title are four beautiful young Parisians who pursue a variety of ultimately unsatisfying (and in one case lethal) dreams. Free spirit Jane (Bernadette Lafont) gets involved with a boorish married businessman whose chubby, grabby best friend expects to make them a ménage. Ginette (Stéphane Audran) hopes to become a great singer, but spends her time impersonating a tacky Italian street chanteuse in a seedy club. Rita (Lucile Saint-Simon) masochistically accepts the put-downs of her pompous bourgeois boyfriend, who allows her to be degraded by his parents. Jacqueline (Clotilde Joano) is the innocent romantic who rejects a "good man" in favor of an ominous biker who spends the film shadowing her before their gruesome meeting.

The film takes place mostly in the nighttime world of Paris' streets and clubs, seemingly an open leisure-class environment full of opportunities but in fact an endless series of traps for these characters. The final trap comes when Jacqueline pursues a romantic ideal in a stark sequence that ends chillingly, if not entirely unpredictably, in death. Chabrol's camera records these events with an impersonality that makes them all the more real and disturbing, and his treatment of the characters as foolish children on the edge of a precipice gives the film a gravitas that will keep it fresh in the viewer's mind.



Messy 'Eva'

Joseph Losey's *Eva* (1962), hacked down from 155 minutes to 103 for its ill-fated release, is one of those legendary films discussed in hushed tones as a butchered masterpiece. The DVD contains two versions: the 103-minute commercial release, and a Swedish version that runs 119 minutes. The bad news is that regardless of running time, *Eva* is a mess. Losey was attempting to break into international circles as a Great Director (after a solid career doing atmospheric British and American B-films), and it shows. Few besides Jeanne Moreau completists and fans of Italian scenery circa 1962 will want to add this to their permanent collection, though it has its interest.

Eva follows the misadventures of a writer, working-class Welshman Tyvian (hunky Stanley Baker), who has written a best-seller allegedly based on his life as a coal miner. The problem is that he's a phony who stole the book from his dead brother. At the famed Harry's Bar, he's confronted by film producer Sergio (Giorgio Albertazzi), whose wife Francesca (Lisi) was Tyvian's mistress before her death. The film then switches to flashback, and in-

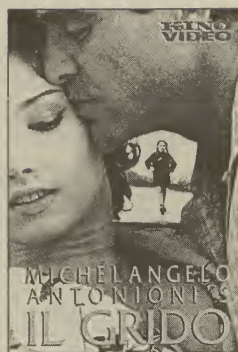
troduces us to Eva (Moreau), a classy whore who breaks into Tyvian's house with the help of a wealthy trick. She spends what seem like hours bathing, listening to Billie Holiday records, chain-smoking, and smiling to herself. When Tyvian arrives, he tosses out the trick and is hit over the head with an ashtray by Eva. This only encourages him, of course, and he spends the rest of the film chasing her from Venice to Rome to taste more of her abuse. Eventually, Tyvian becomes a Jet Set bum, masochistically awaiting his next meeting with Evil Eva.

The film is doomed from the opening, a stentorian Biblical voiceover that's more laughable than tantalizing: "And the man and the woman were naked together, and they were unashamed." They should have been. Tyvian's masochism is ultimately self-defeating; he's too wretched for too long to be of lasting interest. His pursuit of Eva begins to take on an unintended comic overtone as he endures endless physical and psychological assaults. And Eva is simply not an interesting character. Losey's forte was always men, intelligent miserable men, no doubt a reflection of his own apparently constant anxieties. (Losey favorite Dirk Bogarde has written of the director's crying jags that got so bad on one film that the actor had to take over directorial duties for 10 days.)

The film was based on a James Hadley Chase potboiler, and Eva, true to her literary origins, never rises above her origins as a cardboard harpy. Her extreme self-involvement and tedious cruelties border on the grotesque, and even Losey's visual legerdemain — classy mirror shots, stark high-angle compositions, gliding camerawork — can't force her to live onscreen. She's predictable and, in the end, just plain boring.

Desperate living

Antonioni's *Il Grido* (1957) is a tonic to Losey's disappointing effort. It's an unsentimental, visually bravura slice of neorealism that remains one of the director's great '50s achievements. Unlike *Eva*'s Tyvian, this film's Aldo (Steve Cochran) has minimal self-awareness, but also lacks any of Tyvian's self-pity. He's a mechanic in a small Italian village (in the Po Valley near Bologna) who's been having an affair with a married woman, Irma (Alida Valli), for seven years. Irma's husband dies suddenly, and Aldo expects to marry her. Instead, she spurns him, causing him to react violently toward her in a very public



scene. Still desperately in love and finally just desperate, he takes their illegitimate seven-year-old daughter Rosina (Mirna Girardi) on an aimless trek through the rural highways of the Po Valley.

His journey is a kind of *Odyssey* in reverse, with Aldo as a quietly tormented Everyman. Unlike *Odysseus*, he's moving away from his beloved, not toward her. Asked why he's traveling, he can't answer. Asked to stay put, he simply moves on, accompanied by Rosina until it's apparent he's too alienated to take care of her. Aldo begins by visiting a woman from his past, Evira (Betsy Blair), who continues to love him in spite of his indifference but sees something in him that she can't deal with. He continues through a succession of increasingly bleaker environments and encounters, ending with a liaison with a prostitute, Adreina (Lyn Shaw), with whom he lives briefly in a rain-soaked hut.

Steve Cochran was a terminal butch fixture in American B movies, often gangster films, from the 1950s (most notably Walsh's *White Heat*). Here he retains some of the coarse charm of his earlier incarnations, with the addition of a world-weariness that feels as authentic as the real locales in which the film takes place. He consistently underplays, movingly capturing Aldo's transition from disillusionment to despair in small gestures and lingering looks. While the other actors also register strongly, this is finally Cochran's show, and he delivers beautifully.

Antonioni's evocation of vast, unforgiving landscapes that dwarf and finally swallow his characters is in splendid form here. Like *Red Desert*, *Il Grido* situates its denizens in a postindustrial wasteland made up of empty fields that drift into the hazy horizon, long stretches of empty highway, and occasional outposts of humanity that pop up within them: a lonely gas station, a prostitute's collapsing house. The camera pauses on these backdrops as long as it does on Aldo or Irma or Adreina, giving as much weight to a world that eventually engulfs its inhabitants as to the inhabitants themselves. ▼

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Philip Glass

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original writing happens in the percussion, a true battery here numbering 17 instruments (four players), including unusual choices like anvil, marimba, and large and small Tam-Tams (gongs), though what they do always enhances both mood and word.

I don't think I'm going out on a limb when I say that some of these choruses and solos, especially the knockout setting of Job 3, "Let the day perish wherein I was born" (6), and the concluding prayerful one of Shantideva's "Dedication of Merit" will be picked up by choruses and be-

come classics.

And why not? This symphony speaks of our highest human aspirations, and though the tritone which medieval theorists called "the devil in music" haunts the work, it seems to be saying that we're still capable of great things. Davies and his phenomenally alert orchestra put that message across, as do his expressive vocal soloists soprano Ana Maria Martinez, mezzo Denyce Graves, tenor Michael Schade, baritone Eric Owens and bass-baritone Albert Dohmen. And you'd never know that the Hungarian Radio Children's Choir and the Morgan State University Choir were recorded separately in Vienna and New York. ▼

BOOKS

The old master

Gore Vidal's last novel?

by Robert Julian

The Golden Age by Gore Vidal;
Doubleday, \$27.50

Gore Vidal turns out historical novels in much the same way Danielle Steele churns out romance novels. At this point in Vidal's long career, books like *The Golden Age* are just short of formulaic, reeking of thinly veiled gossip, all cloaked in the mantle of Vidal's superior intellect and firm grasp of history, American and

otherwise. In this seventh and final installment on the American empire, Vidal blows smoke up his own posterior by writing himself into the narrative at several junctures, always in a flattering light, and then basking in the glow of his own self-reflection. In ego, Vidal makes Norman Mailer look like Mother Teresa. And his 1998 memoir, *Palimpsest*, clearly establishes that America's most brilliant expatriate homosexual is also an insufferable human being.

The Golden Age takes place between 1939 and 1954, with most

of the book's 470 pages given over to the World War II years. Vidal creates a fictional Washington DC family, and places it at the center of American politics and publishing. Around these characters, Vidal weaves historical fact with fiction, providing glimpses into Franklin Roosevelt's home, marriage, and cabinet meetings. Vidal outlines how Roosevelt provoked the attack on Pearl Harbor and cleverly led the nation into war, and how Harry Truman bumbled through the aftermath.

In his own time-honored tradition, Vidal once again documents the insufferable gullibility of the American public and the obsessively manipulative politicians who pull the strings for their own personal gain, and that of the ruling classes. At its most fundamental level, this is the Vidal formula for historic novels about America. But rather than sounding like a broken record, Vidal manages to document his assertions time and again, demonstrating how the same *modus operandi* continues to play itself out over the centuries.

Vidal's prose in *The Golden Age* is crisp and smart, and he takes some wonderfully rich swipes at more than a few targets. My personal favorite is his succinct skewering of Ernest Hemingway's dreadful writing, in a little aside that he places in the mouth of novelist Dawn Powell, and drops onto page 424.

In the final chapter, Vidal



The Golden Age author Gore Vidal: basking in self-relection.

changes from the third person to the first person, and becomes the narrator, orchestrating a fictional joint interview between himself and the book's protagonist at Vidal's home in Ravello, Italy. They are two old men looking back on the century past. In the author's words, "The Roosevelts and the Trumans are simply spirits and once their scenes are acted out, they melt into air, into thin air, as we shall presently do, still hankering after what was not

meant to be, ever"

In this chapter, Vidal's witchery is replaced by genuine wisdom, and the real depth of his understanding emerges. He demonstrates the ability to transcend the specifics of who did what to whom, and to take some comfort in the cyclical nature of human accomplishment and international affairs. It does not require a great leap of understanding to realize that Vidal's long and prolific

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Bellwether tales

by Jim Piechota

Circa 2000: Gay Fiction at the Millennium edited by Robert Drake & Terry Wolverton; Alyson Books, \$14.95

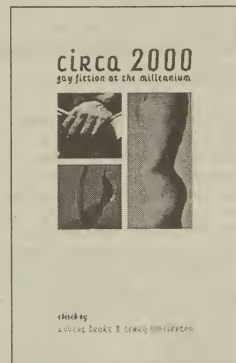
Though the millennium frenzy may be passé, this collection of outstanding gay fiction is anything but. Editors Drake and Wolverton have amassed a bevy of literary talent (some well-known, some new), and the 21 brilliant stories contained within showcase a panoply of styles, narrative depth, and personal histories.

The volume opens with M. Shayne Bell's unsettling, futuristic story "Mrs. Lincoln's China," which was a 1995 Hugo Award finalist. Set in a time of civil unrest as violent rioting breaks out nationwide, a woman loots the White House and steals priceless historic Presidential dinnerware on which she serves her son a final meal. Dark, deep, and prophetic, Bell's story is a smart forewarning to us all.

Survival with HIV infection takes center stage in several stories, such as Bernard Cooper's surrealistic suburban nightmare, "Hunters and Gatherers." Cooper's characters are mentally strong-willed, but physically they've been "whittled by the blade of AIDS." Thankfully, the narrative content, with such succinct detailing, never sinks to an overly dismal level. Cooper fans can find his latest book, a collection of short stories called *Guess Again*, in stores this month.

Emerging talent Jamison Currier stays close to the same timely theme with his moving tale "Pasta Night," where two lovers reinvigorate an AIDS-strained and traumatized relationship by caring for HIV-positive babies in a hospice.

Popular author Scott Heim's remarkable entry, "Deep Green, Pale Purple" is a poignant tale of two loving young brothers and their abusive, menacing father working on the family apple orchard. Together the boys escape



their shared pain by camping in the backyard under skies as "flimsy and thrilling as a promise." Heim's gorgeous prose is seamless and heart-rending, and if this is any indication, his forthcoming novel *We Disappear* (where this story appears) should be dazzling.

On the lighter side, the compilation also boasts a prickly sense of humor with Trevor Renado's wickedly stereotypical "Get a Lifestyle." This chatty, hilarious, farcical essay nails the West Hollywood gay scene to the wall in 10 sardonic pages. Renado's main character is, of course, himself: a writer steeped in "Hollywood delusionalism" described with "stunning all-American looks, buff build, and 12% body fat." Anyone we know?

David Vernon's marvelously spooky "Couple Kills" will surely satisfy fans of the suspense/horror genre. Here, one man's secretive nocturnal activities pique the curiosity and eventual dread of his boyfriend, who is obsessed with the mythical Chupacabra, a Mexican bloodsucking creature.

Other writers making appearances in this anthology include Michael Lowenthal, David Leavitt, William J. Mann, Mitch Cullin and more. With every entry having merit, this exceptional book serves as an important bellwether for those with any doubts about the state of gay fiction at the dawn of the 21st century. ▼

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Deals and steals

Visual Aid's 7th annual 'Big Deal' art sale

by Will Shank

In an era when artists are losing affordable work spaces and are having to fight at City Hall for subsidies in order to be able to live in San Francisco, it is refreshing to consider an event where artists are helping out other artists. Among the artists who are contributing to "Big Deal" this year will be Fuzebox, a San Francisco band recent-

ly evicted from Downtown Rehearsal Studio. They will perform in the SOMArts Gallery on Saturday, November 18.

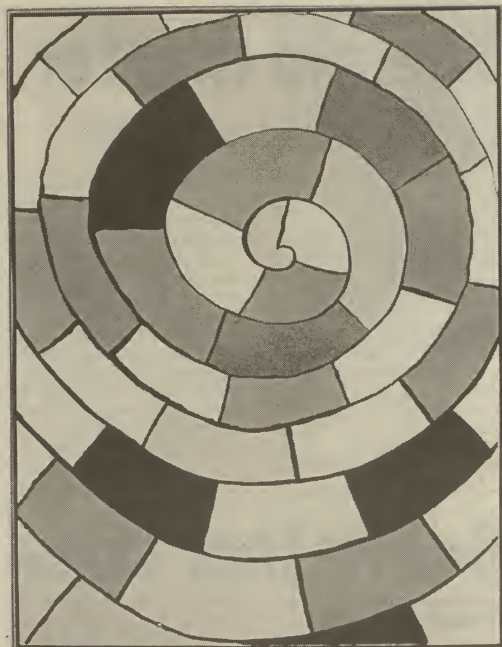
"Big Deal" is an annual fundraising event for Visual Aid, whose mission is to provide art supplies and exhibition opportunities for artists with life-threatening illnesses. This is the seventh time around for "Big Deal," and a big deal it is!

In addition to the artists who

benefit from these activities, the art shopper is the real winner in this rare chance to own original art at an extremely affordable price. For \$85 a piece (plus tax), paintings, prints, drawings, and sculptures from a record number (over 400) of participating artists go to the first — not the highest — bidder. So the line at SOMArts Gallery forms early, usually in fact the night before, for the chance to be first to get at the real goodies.

The democratic nature of the process lets the true joy of collecting shine through. Since all the prices are the same, the buyers at the art sale make choices according to their taste. What a concept!

I've landed some prizes in the past, and this year promises jewels by local talents who show in major West Coast and East Coast galleries and participate in Bay Area "Open Studios." This group includes Robert Brady, Kathryn Van Dyke, Gary Bukovnik, Blazin, Gayle Tanaka, David Smith-Harrison, and Joan Perlman, among many others. There will also be a silent auction (probably at prices higher than \$85) for original works by Enrique Chagoya, William Wiley, Joesam, Robert Hudson, Margaret Kilgallen, Victor Cartagena, Yeahue Um, Patrick Brown, Marco Sassone and Alexander Calder.



Alexander Calder, *Untitled*, lithograph-print 26/125, undated

Don't trust your own taste? The prices come down as the afternoon progresses, so the bar is lowered, and the risk becomes less. It's quite an adventure, and a learning process for the fledgling collector. The minimalist painting, or the macramé?

Come on down!

Tickets go on sale Saturday, November 18 at 3 p.m. at 934 Brannan St. Doors to SOMArts Gallery open at 4 p.m. for exhibition viewing. Sale begins at 5 p.m. Admission of \$15 includes hors d'oeuvres and beverages. For more information, call Visual Aid at (415) 777-8242. ▼

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Aluminum Group

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the directions: "When John and I first started out, we wanted all of our music to sound like it was coming from an AM radio — that simple and at that level. As we have worked, we have dissected songs. They are very constructed songs, not jam sessions. We talk about this at great length — how we want to fashion an experiment with the song."

Their sexuality, Frank says, contributes to their music, but it is not the whole driving factor.

"We are primary people, and that is really important to me," he says. "My sexuality does play a role in my life, but it is not everything I do. I am a songwriter. I am gay, gay, gay. As far as songwriting goes, I do draw from personal experiences, but I also tell stories. It

is all intertwined."

John adds: "Our music is about people relating to people, whatever you are. I do hope that it can transcend to where it is more about identification; that when people listen, they get a lot of things out of our music."

When they were first putting the group together, John says he was very conscious and deliberate about being out as a gay man.

"That is what I am, so that is what filters through everything I do," he says. "I am a very sensual and sexual person. Music is about what is interesting to me."

According to Frank, being open hasn't been a career issue.

"We don't deal in the music industry," he says. "We are not selling millions of CDs. We are dealing with a select group of people."

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Gore Vidal

◀ previous page

career is coming to a close. And although *The Golden Age* is not a groundbreaking work, it always delivers the one quality you can count on from Vidal: intelligence.

Because he was clearly and unapologetically queer, Vidal's work was blacklisted by *The New York Times* for years; they would not publish excerpts from his early work or even review it. And as I turned the final pages of *The Golden Age*, I realized that neither the world nor book reviewers will have Gore Vidal to kick around much longer. Contemplating this fact, I am truly and deeply saddened by the impoverishment to come. There will never be another author, or another homosexual, who can be compared to Gore Vidal. ▼

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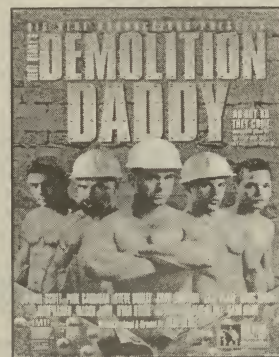
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VIDEO

Everybody is Eve

Almodóvar out on video

by Will Shank

All About My Mother, written and directed by Pedro Almodóvar

Almodóvar's masterpiece, the Oscar-winner for best foreign film of 1999 is now available on video. The film stars Cecilia Roth as Manuela, whose search for the father of her son takes her from Madrid to Barcelona and her roots.

Because the father has since become a woman named Lola, Manuela's story takes some surreal turns. In what other movie of recent memory are there not one, but two major characters who are chicks-with-dicks? Manuela's life also becomes entwined with that of a pregnant young nun (Penélope Cruz) and her rigid mother. If the instant rapport among these various women strains their credibility for an American audience, the unlikely situations probably resonate more for most Spanish viewers, whose passion and impulsiveness may well have led them into similar alliances.

During the course of the film, almost everybody gets a chance to

be Eve Harrington and have her moment in front of the footlights. Gay references abound, beyond the obvious iconic status of Tennessee Williams' *Streetcar* and the Bette Davis classic *All About Eve*. Besides being riotously funny, touching, and moving, *All About My Mother* looks great, like all Almodóvar films, and it works as well on the small screen as it did in theaters.

Tragic as the core of Manuela's story is, the screenplay is paced so well that there are only rare moments for the viewer to take the time to cry. *All About My Mother* allows us to empathize, and to move on. That is the gift of a great novelist, or a great filmmaker.

Those Who Love Me Can Take the Train, directed by Patrice Chéreau

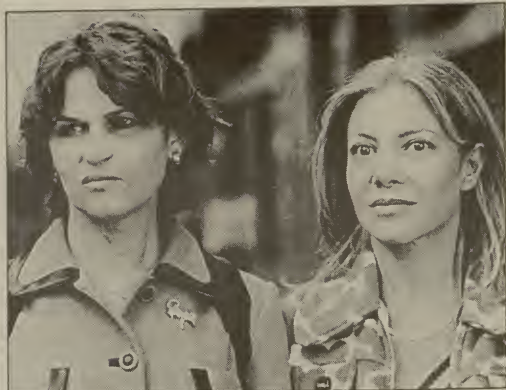
This off-beat French film begins a bit like *Murder on the Orient Express*. A group of disparate individuals rushes to board a train in a European railway station. But Agatha Christie this is not. This group has been organized into two adjacent coaches in order to reach a common goal: they are all headed to Limoges for the funeral

of one Jean-Baptiste (Jean-Louis Trintignant). And it seems that most of them, men and women alike, have loved the deceased, literally.

Hetero, homo, and bi-sexual jealousies, rivalries, and flirtations play themselves out on the train ride. There's also a hot groping scene in the Men's Room. Conflicts arise. Motivations are suspect. Sample dialogue: Man: "She's sad." Woman: "Because she raped him once in Madrid? Big deal!"

A tragicomic subplot involves the odyssey of Jean-Baptiste's body as it travels in a car on a route parallel that of the train. The characterizations of the blizzard of participants are broad rather than deep.

The melodrama goes on far too long, motivation remains murky, and the various interlocking, overlapping relationships are too complex to keep straight. But the film is a visual treat, as Chéreau's frantic camera and sometimes frenzied editing match the anxiety of the characters and the awkwardness of the scenario. This filmmaker's journey into strange territory is worth the viewer's voyage. ▼



Antonia San Juan and Cecilia Roth in *All About My Mother*

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SF Symphony

◀ page 29

and clarity. How to tell if it was a good or bad performance? Many more hearings, I suspect, and I doubt that will be very likely.

The Henze might have seemed ideal for the metronomic beat of Emmanuel Villaume, so his choice of Tchaikovsky's most personal symphonic utterance as a conclusion to the evening appeared almost perverse. The Sixth Symphony or *Pathétique* is one of those pillars of the repertoire that must be given a daring interpretation in concert. Otherwise, why bother trotting the old warhorse out again? We can always hear perfectly careful interpretations on disc, granted some very bold exceptions.

Villaume managed to drain every movement of any dramatic impact, and that, most likely, was his intent. After all, the overheated theatricality is right there in the score, yes? What better way to cause a fresh listening than to avoid bathos? Wrongo, *monsieur!* I went home to my guilty pleasure, the willfully idiosyncratic performance with Leonard Bernstein, conducted live late in his career. It doesn't bear listening often, but the way he practically rewrites the score's tempi and his overpowering involvement make the experience truly shattering. And if that isn't closer to the composer's intentions, I'm waiting for a more convincing viewpoint than Emmanuel Villaume's.

Undercooked fare

Alasdair Neale, SFS Associate Conductor and leader of the SFS Youth Orchestra through the 2000-01 season, returned center stage last week for another respectable but slightly undercooked appearance.

Cellist Lynn Harrell was the big cheese on that occasion, so Neale's blandness did nothing to detract. The Dvorak Cello Concerto in B minor, Opus 104 is probably up there on everyone's list of favorite star turns in the concert hall, so like the Tchaikovsky Sixth, there



Conductor Alasdair Neale

should be a good reason for hearing it yet again. Harrell made his case from the opening bars of his entrance. Using a slightly grainy tone that could warm to rich depth in a moment, the soloist made the most of the music's introspective musings and the big, beautiful tunes. The performance was terrific, and the audience rewarded Harrell with one of the most prolonged ovations of the new season. Harrell rewarded them with an encore.

The evening continued with a bit of comic relief, in the form of Peter Maxwell Davies' *Cross Lane Fair* for Northumbrian Pipes and Orchestra. Mark Jordan, in a fair-ground juggler's motley costume, gamely played the piper, and even managed some very respectable work with his balls. His partner on-stage was Jack Van Geem on bodhran, a traditional drum. The piece itself is not as good or involving as the composer's famous *An Orkney Wedding*, but I enjoyed the spirited involvement of the soloist, even if some of my more conservative seatmates were visibly unamused.

After intermission, the personable Neale gave us the Symphony No. 5, Opus 82 by Jean Sibelius. I am always enthusiastic about hearing this composer in the concert hall, and the Fifth is one of his most concise and thrilling works. The conductor certainly seemed to be invested in giving a concentrat-

ed and emotionally involving interpretation, and the players, with a few trumpet flubs excepted, were responsive to his lead. Still, the results were mostly uninvolved.

The Symphony No. 5 is a difficult work to bring off properly. It demands great precision while asking for passion, even as the players struggle to keep afloat amid dense orchestrations and tricky rhythms. Neale had the technical aspects down pat and so did his musicians, but it wasn't until the exalted finale that the performance took wing. Those concluding four chords and two unisons cannot fail but to impress, yet I wish we could have been a little better convinced. ▼

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OUT & ABOUT

Calendare by Mark Mardon

Tranny hacks

Some years ago, when I was all but unknown to the elite of San Francisco's queer performance underground, I more-or-less literally bumped into both **Heklina** and **Pippi Lovestocking** in the men's locker room at the Central YMCA. I recall being starstruck, not so much by their drag personas, but by their sheer ordinariness. I could see they were standard-issue males, just plain guys, hung like the rest of us, and in no way like their stage selves: not flamboyant, not sarcastic, not self-absorbed. Maybe it's stretching things to say so, but I could imagine them kicking back in some dorm room, beers in hand, watching a football game on TV!

That impression lingers each time I see either or both out of drag. No, they're not exactly butch, but you can tell they get the same sort of kick out of dressing up in women's clothes and acting out wild fantasies that sailors do engaging in drag rituals while cooped up on ships at sea, or that gold miners did entertaining themselves during the Gold Rush. Heklina, Pippi, legendary diva **Juanita MORE!** and the rest of the **Trannyshack**



Mistress of Ceremonies Heklina



Juanita MORE!

gang rediscovered and have exploited the hell out of a secret: low drag is all about getting sexy boys to do wildly embarrassing stuff for you they'd never dream of doing with or as ordinary guys.

Once I was easily intimidated by drag queens, so exotic and overwhelming did they seem to my shy sensibilities. At the time of my YMCA encounter, Heklina and Pippi represented all that was magical and mysterious and powerful about Trannyshack — they were the crème de la

crème of the rag-drag world (as opposed to the high-fashion drag world, a whole different scene and mindset from Trannyshack). Heklina and Pippi were two visionary entertainers and empresarios who with reckless abandon in the 1990s brought sinfully sexy, brashly irreverent low drag to San Francisco, and in so doing ended the drought of SoMa's pathetic late-'80s through early '90s gay nightlife.

Everything had been turning straight South of Market, once a 1970s and early '80s stronghold of leather people and men with tight t-shirts and blue jeans. With that energy fading during the eighties — in large part because AIDS sapped much of the gay community's vitality — SoMa nightlife became a nightmare. You could find gay bars, but they were mostly dull, drunken places with dour faces and artificially pumped-up energies. Drag, when it showed up at all, seemed lifeless, stuck in a time warp, hopelessly enamored with the ethereal/unattainable glamour of Hollywood and record-company divas. The once lively old Stud on Folsom Street fell to "the enemy" (as many of us viewed the straight invaders), and the new Stud on Harrison at 9th never quite kicked in — until Heklina and Pippi and their guy-gal pals came along.

Now, on Sunday night, November 19 — a date that will live not in infamy, but in blasphemy — Heklina, Juanita MORE! and Pippi Lovestocking will be hosting "The 5th Annual Miss Trannyshack Pageant 2000," featuring a mess of drag queens out to top one another in an eye-clawing, nail biting contest to capture a cheap crown and completely ruin their reputations. It's exactly the sort of useless-but-fun contest that fills the likes of producers Pippi and Juanita MORE! with wicked glee as they run to the bank with all the money they suck in from tranny chasers who are notoriously easy marks. That's assuming **Miss Chocolate**, guarding the till at the door, doesn't abscond with all the funds. And who could blame her?! It's always the Wild West at Trannyshack, a gold rush of guys getting tipsy and loose and ready to goose. Anything goes at Trannyshack. ▼

Heklina and Juanita MORE! present "The 5th Annual Miss Trannyshack Pageant 2000," featuring DJ Pinky Ring and a special appearance by Miss Trannyshack 1999 Mangela Lansbury. With celebrity judges Nikki Star, Peaches Christ, Electro, and Jordan L' Moore. Miss Chocolate rules the door. Sunday, November 19, 8:30-3am at City Nights, 715 Harrison St. (at 3rd St.). \$12 adv.; \$15 door. Tix at A Different Light Bookstore and NaNa. Info: www.heklina.com

Fr

Jon Sims Center for the Arts

AIRspace Artists in Residence present the final workshop production of "Original Blessing," a love letter to the 21st century, in which performer Federico (Rico) Hewson looks at the 1999 Y2K craze. From collected e-mails and varied opinions, Hewson pieces together society's hopes and anxieties for the new century, our growing relationship to computers, cultural meltdown, 30 years of gay pride, and the new theories of consciousness evolution. Choreographed with music, poetry and son. With post-performance discussion plus a reception for the artist with light refreshments. \$5-\$10 sliding (NOTAFLOF). 8:30pm. 1519 Mission St. (at 11th St.). Info: 621-4637; www.jonsimsctr.org

New Conservatory Theatre Center

In concert: The West Coast premiere of "A New Brain" by William Finn and James Lapine, the Tony-winning creators of the 1992 Broadway hit *Falsettos*. Finn was once diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor and almost died, but miraculously recovered. The musical is his poignant response not to the threat of death, but to the joy of living. Directed by George Quick, with Musical Director Michael O'Dell. \$16-\$32. 8pm (Sun. 2pm). Thru Nov. 26. 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market St.). Tix: 861-8972.

Paramount Theatre, Oakland

In concert: Oakland East Bay Symphony open their 2000-2001 season with "A Bernstein Remembrance," including performances of Bernstein's *Divertimento* (1980) and "Three Meditations" from *Mass* (1971), plus Mozart's *Requiem*. Conducted by Maestro Michael Morgan. \$15-\$55. 8pm. 2025 Broadway (at 21st St.), Oakland. Tix from Ticketmaster, (415) 421-8497. Info: (510) 444-0801; www.oebso.org

AIDS Health Project Services Center

"Dating Essentials," a workshop for gay and bisexual men regardless of HIV status. Learn how to keep dating simple, and how to get a second date. Sponsored by the AIDS Health Project's Reach Program. Free. 6:30-9:30pm. 1930 Market St. RSVP: 476-6448, ext. 1.

A Different Light Bookstore

Reading & book signing with Merlin Holland, grandson of Oscar Wilde and editor of *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde*. Free. 7:30pm. 489 Castro St. Info: 431-0891; www.adlbooks.com

The Lab

Opening reception: "New Sound, Light, and Sculptural Installations by Amy Balkin, Brandon LaBelle and Tony Meredith." Free. 6-9pm. Exhibition runs Wed.-Sat., 2-7pm, thru Dec. 16. 2948 16th St. (at Capp).

MACT Monthly Video Night

Men of All Colors Together (MACT) view "Relax, It's

Just Sex" at their relaxed gathering in the Castro District. Refreshments served. \$2 donation. 7pm. 490 Collingwood St. (at 22nd St.). Apt. 3. Info: 675-0201; <http://go.to/mactsfba>

Dance Mission

ZaZa Dance Theater, a new Mission District company of ethnically diverse and multi-generational performers, present an aerial concert with live music and drama. Themes range from contemporary issues such as artist evictions to ancient myths. Dancers fly through the air in a large web-like rope structure. Featuring NEA award-winning choreographer Theresa Dickinson, aerialist Maica Folch, drummer Rachel Bouch, and dancers Samir Bitar, Emmitt Hancock, Chris Sia, Jessica Robinson, and Quinton Bennett. \$10 (NOTAFLOF). 8pm. 3316 24th St. (at Mission). Info: 595-6339.

Cafe Du Nord

Vintage jazz and blues live with Lavy Smith and her Red Hot Skillet Lickers. \$7. 10pm. 2170 Market St. 861-5016.

ODC theater

Flight IV Project for Emerging Dancers presents "New & Used," an evening of works by choreographers Jessica Adams and Megan Nicely. A macabre fairy tale, a treatise on trash, and a journey through space make up this program of premiere and repertory works. \$10 adv.; \$12 door. 8pm. Also On Nov. 18. 3153 17th St. (at Shotwell). Tix/info: 863-9834; www.ticketweb.com and/or www.odcdance.org

848 Community Space

Screening: "Unspeakeable: The Documentary," a look at the life and art of Native American Satanic Reverend Steven Johnson Leyba. This controversial rough-cut edition in-



Robert Coffman continues a tradition with his holiday reading of Truman Capote's *A Thanksgiving Visitor* at Theatre Rhinoceros. See Monday.

cludes rare footage of the infamous whisky-sodomy/blood protest ritual at the 1997 Jack Davis party. \$5. 8pm. 848 Divisadero (at McAllister). Info: 577-3972.

Palace of the Legion of Honor

Omni Foundation for the Performing Arts presents "The International Guitar Night," a concert highlighting a diversity of cultural styles and techniques, hosted by guitarist Brian Gore of San Francisco. Featuring flamboyant Brazilian guitarist Marco Pereira, Italian finger-style master Antonio Calogero, and a rare appearance by the legendary composer and improviser Ralph Towner. \$25. 8pm. Lincoln Park, 100 34th Ave. Tix/info: 242-4500; www.omniconcerts.com

La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley

In concert: RhythMix, a dynamic quintet of women drummers showcasing high-

energy grooves, distinctive vocals, and ethnic instrumentation, creating a soulful polyrhythmic interpretation with Taiko, Congas, Djembe, Dumbek, Cajon, Balafon and voice. \$12. Doors open 8pm; concert at 8:30pm. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. Info: La Peña, (510) 849-2568; www.rhythmix.org

Artrock Gallery

Opening reception: "The Art of Grace Slick," featuring original paintings and drawings by 1960s music icon Slick, best known as the leader of the Jefferson Airplane. Free. 7pm. 1155 Mission St. (btwn 7th & 8th sts.). Info: 255-7390; www.artrock.com

Sat 18

Luna Sea
In concert: Gwen Avery, cele-



The percussionists of RhythMix bring their world-music sounds to La Peña. See Friday.



Corrie Borris, Alex Brose, Jon Gale and Patrick Dukeman perform the West Coast premiere of *A New Brain* at New Conservatory Theatre Center. See Friday.

brating the eagerly anticipated release of her debut CD, *Sugar Mama 2K*, produced by Grammy-nominated music historian Linda Tillery. Featuring an upbeat blend of soul & jazz, inspired by the music Avery heard as a child hanging around her grandmother's speakeasy in Verona, Pennsylvania. Since the 1970s she has toured, recorded, and played venues as diverse as outdoor music festivals and prisons. \$10-\$15. 8pm. Luna Sea Women's Performance Project, 2940 16th St., 216-C. Info/tix: 863-2989; www.lunasea.org and/or www.gwenavery.com

New Conservatory Theatre Center

Opening night: the world premiere of *Debunking Love*, a comedy by Prince Gomolivas (*Big Fat Buddhas*; *The Theory of Everything*; *The Duboce Triangle* "Smiutopolis" episode), directed by Arturo Catricala (*The Lisbon Traviata*; *Visiting Mr. Green*). A young Asian American novelist; writer's block; crazy romance; a neurotic friend or two; sex, romance, rice queens and snow queens; Asian America and White America — they all come to a boil in this story of looking for love in all the wrong races. \$35 opening night; \$15-\$25 other nights. 8pm. 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market St.). Tix: 861-8972.

Jon Sims Center for the Arts

"My Butch Career: A Memoir," a slide/talk presentation by pioneering lesbian scholar Esther Newton (*Mother Camp*; *Cherry Grove*, *Fire Island*; *Sixty Years in America's First Gay and Lesbian Town*; *Margaret Mead Made Me Gay: Personal Essays, Public Ideas*), who for decades has been on the forefront of lesbian scholarship and intellectual life. She'll present a very personal and visual narrative of her life as a middle-class white butch lesbian, an account informed by an historical and anthropological perspective. Newton is Professor of Anthropology and Kempner Distinguished Professor at State University of New York at Purchase, and is the founder and co-chair of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Program there. \$5-\$10 sliding. 8pm. 1519 Mission St. 554-0402.

A Different Light Bookstore

Reading & booksigning with photographer James Spada, whose images in *Black & White Men* depict idealized male forms. Free. 7:30pm. 489 Castro St. Info: 431-0891; www.adlbooks.com

Westminster Presbyterian Church, San Jose

The Rainbow Women's Choir performs "Stardust!"

This "not really a holiday concert" of old and new bright points of musical light, along with sparkling seasonal favorites, follows upon the chorus's spectacular appearance as performers at and co-hosts of Festival 2000, the international quadrennial gathering of 140 GALA Chorus held in San Jose last summer. ASL interpreted; wheelchair accessible. \$15 door. 8pm. 1100 Shasta in San Jose, just off the Alameda. Info: (408) 293-0637; www.rainbow-women.org

Sun 19

GLBT Historical Society

"Hey, Sailor!" a roundtable discussion with Kevin Bentley, author of *Sailor: Vintage Photos of a Masculine Icon* (Council Oaks Press), physique photographer David Martin, and ex-sailors and their admirers. They'll examine in-depth the book's images of sailors in action, off-ship and on, including photos of the ritual initiation of novice sailors, or "pollywogs," by older, more experienced sailors known as "sea daddies." Free. 2-4pm. 973 Market St., Suite 400. Info: 777-5455; www.glhs.org

A Different Light Bookstore

Reading & booksigning with Willy Wilkinson, author of *Stricken*, the first book to tell the stories of people stricken with Chronic Fatigue Immune Dysfunction Syndrome. Free. 7:30pm. 489 Castro St. Info: 431-0891; www.adlbooks.com

Mon 20

Theatre Rhinoceros

Continuing an 18-year tradition at Rhino, Robert Coffman reads Truman Capote's "A Thanksgiving Visitor," classic stories of young Buddy, Capote's special friend. Reception follows. A benefit for Theatre Rhinoceros. \$10. 7pm. 2926 16th St. Tix: 861-5079.

Piaf's

QComedy.com presents "Gay Comedy Showcase," hosted by Pippi Lovestocking, with

Stephanie Howard visiting from LA, plus local celebs Erin Souza, Leslie Chollar, Darrick Richardson, Gretchen Rootes, Lori Chapman, Tristan Carolan, Lisa Geduldig, and Bridget Schwartz. \$5. 8pm. 1686 Market St. (at Gough). 541-5610.

A Different Light Bookstore

Reading & booksigning with local film critic Mick Lasalle, author of *Complicated Women*, about the women of pre-code Hollywood. Free. 7:30pm. 489 Castro St. Info: 431-0891; www.adlbooks.com

Tue 21

A Different Light Bookstore

Reading & booksigning with Aaron Lawrence, author of *Male Escort's Guide to Getting Rich the Hard Way*, advice for those considering a career in escort services, exploring the ins and outs of the business. Free. 7:30pm. 489 Castro St. Info: 431-0891; www.adlbooks.com

Wed 22

El Rio

El Rio's weekly same-sex salsa dance class takes place free of charge from 6:30 to 7:30pm, followed by a live flamenco dance performance at 8pm with Yaelisa & Caminos Flamenco Co. \$8 cover. 21 + w/d. 3158 Mission St. (btwn Caesar Chavez and Valencia sts.). Info: 282-3325.

Thu 23

First Unitarian Church

"Tenderloin Tessie's Thanksgiving Dinner" welcomes volunteers to help serve meals or work in the kitchen, a service to those in need of holiday cheer and sustenance. Shifts are available from 7am to 6pm. Call 922-0422 for information, or show up at the church at Geary and Franklin.

Dimensions, San Jose

San Jose's Club Papi, producers of some of the largest Latin gay dance parties in the Bay Area, present a special "Thanksgiving 2000, 'Hawaiian Style'" dance party, featuring DJ Mike of Ozz, LA spinning the best Spanish, hip hop and house sounds for the untanned boys in their sexy flower-print shorts. With tropical drink specials, go-go papis and mamis, and three full bars. Wear a Hawaiian shirt and receive free CD or tape. Win airfare for two to Waikiki. 9pm-2am. 21 + w/d. 369 S. 1st St., San Jose. Info: (408) 793-0113; www.papipresents.com

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Bay Area Reporter
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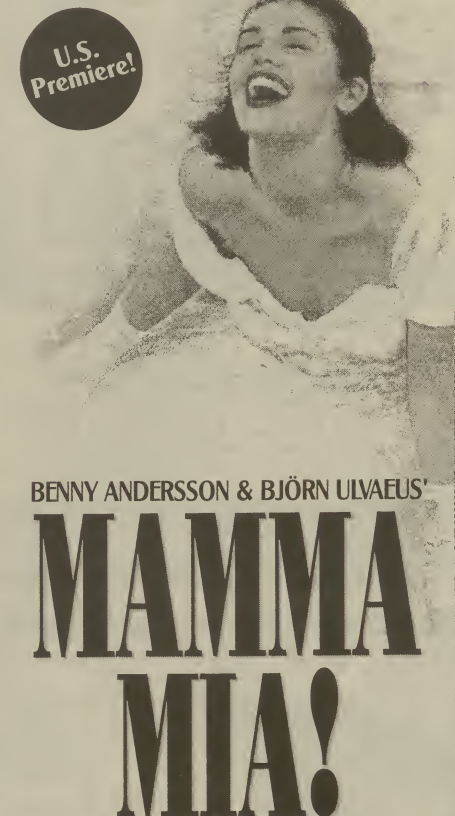
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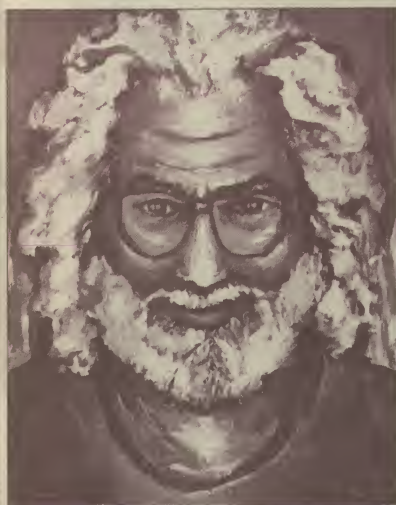
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The paintings and drawings of rock star Grace Slick go on display at Artrock Gallery. See Friday.

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Titles & sashes galore

by Mister Marcus

Last weekend in the U.S. and Canada, from the Russian River to Ottawa, the leather community unleashed several new male and female title holders. Most of these winners will go on to compete at higher levels, in hopes of reigning supreme in the rubber/latex world.

In Ottawa, the delightful Howard Hao stepped aside and sashed a successor. Several of the high holy cows of the leather kingdom were there to see Norm Miller capture the title, with Rick Kingston the runner-up in a field of four hopefuls.

Norm is the first member of the Ottawa Knights MC — the producers of the contest — to win the title. Judges Al Hodgins, Joanne Gaddy, Tom Robinson and Dean Ross had to do without the expertise of Chris Holmgren (the new Emperor of Toronto), but American Leather Boy Randie Smith made the judges' jobs easy.

Norm will compete at the International Mister Leather contest next May.

A highlight of the weekend was the reappearance of a long-lost item. Somehow the metal lunch box that mysteriously disappeared in Washington, DC last April, that belonged to The Wicked Witch of the East, Vern Stewart, suddenly re-appeared in Ottawa. Hmm. Leather ghosts at work?

The Witch himself was there, together with his new squeeze from Salem, Massachusetts. Will there be a baby witch? Alas, there was no word of anyone getting the "pick of the litter." And no, there is no truth to the rumor that Vern is changing his name to "Rosemary"!

In Chicago, word was flashed that seven men competed for the Mr. International Rubber title at the world-famous Cell Block. Khri Francis — aka- El Tubbo — emceed the event, and outgoing MIR Tom Kelly judged along with Thomas Smith (IMR 99), Christof Lehner (MIR 98), Dave Rhodes of TLJ and Tim Brough.

Vendors, fun lovers and all sorts of rubbery people were there when Chad McLaughlin of Chicago was named the winner. The first runner-up was Tommy DeNile of Bloomington, Indiana



Anna Macias, left, was named Ms. Russian River Leather 2001 last weekend, and T. Jay Cain was chosen Mr. North Coast Leather 2001 at the Russian River Eagle last weekend in Guerneville, California.

(hubba hubba!), while the second runner-up was Jim Drew of San Mateo, California.

Patti Brown reports it was a bonanza weekend on Upper Halsted Street, with people attending from as far away as Holland, Germany, England, Australia, Mexico, Canada, and Israel. Chicago leather has quite a reach!

Closer to home, in San Jose, the Mr. And Ms. Santa Clara County leather contest on Saturday night culminated a weekend long Leather Odyssey.

One man competed for the Mr. slot, and he had to get at least 75 percent of the available points to win.

Two women competed for the Ms. title — Gwen Evans and "Night Lace."

When judges Diana Hardick, Alan Little-Kingpierce, Mistress Blade, Rev. Larry Whitsell, and Mark Ingham finished scoring, Glen Fidi emerged the winner of the Mr. Title, and Gwen Evans is Ms. Santa Clara Co. Leather.

East Coast leather mavens will remember Glen Fidi participating in many other leather competitions.

Up at the Russian River, Graylin Thornton teamed up with Shann Carr, which made for a lively exchange of dialogue as they 'processed six men vying for the new Mr. North Coast Leather title. The six contestants were: Brian Carr, Cliff Pratt, Joel Kenn, T. Jay Cain, Sean M. Thompson and John Ganssle. I was honored to join the judging panel with IML 79 David Kloss heading up the panel consisting of Beth Downey, Anna Macias, Rod Wood, and Jack Radcliffe (that hot bear video star).

The effervescent, talented and very likeable Terri Foster entertained between judging segments. She had the place stomping with her upbeat vocal renditions that delivered inspiring messages with their clever lyrics. Terri is a pro, and it sure was good hearing her warble her heart out!

Earlier in the weekend, the first ever Ms. Russian River Leather contest brought out two women

next page ►

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Thursday, November 16

The fifth anniversary of Daddy's Bar began last night, but it will be jumping tonight around 2100 when the Employee of the Year is named, the Daddy of the Year is announced, and some lucky person will win a Daddy's Bar vest. Frank Nowicki had to cancel as the MC due to work conflicts. Don't miss this one!

Weekend, November 17-18

In Cincinnati, Ohio, IML Mike Taylor passes on his sash as Mr. Tri-State Leather. Lots of leather people will gather for this event. If you're in the vicinity, call (513) 281-7230 or email to: mrmv@aol.com for details.

In Portland, Oregon, Ms Gay NW Misha & Poison perform at Todd's for the PWA Clothing Drive, with exotic dancers, bootblack contest, and a fun show. American leatherman Dean Ogren lends his presence to this one.

Wednesday, November 17

The Exiles of SF present "Rough Housing" at the Women's Building in the Mission (18th St. at Valencia). Bring sweats if you want to participate.

Doors open at 1930; demos begin at 2000.

Saturday, November 18

Golden Gate Guards celebrate their 14th anniversary at the Eagle from 1900-2200, admittance by wearing club overlay or invitation in hand. Buffet, adult beverages and food by Andy Rosea]. Congratulations.

Bears of SF beer/soda bust at the Lone Star for \$7 from 1600-1900. Bring non-perishable foods and get free raffle tickets

Wednesday, November 22

Leather Buddies at 933 Harrison tonight. Strict dress code enforced, i.e. boots, leather, latex, uniforms only. Absolutely no cologne or after-shave lotion or hair grease. Butch it up!

Weekend, November 22-26

Quite possibly the best Canadian leather contest, it's the Toronto Leatherman 2001 contest, when eStevan de Castro will pass the sash in that beautiful city. Holy (leather) cows from all over are attending for the extravaganza chaired by Duncan McLachlan. Always a great time in Toronto, and with five leather bars, you can't go wrong!

POLKSTRASSE

Tranny wars

by Sweet Lips

The competition will be fierce among this year's top nine tranny contenders at the Fifth Annual Miss Trannyshack Pageant 2000, coming up this Sunday, November 19 at 715 Harrison St. Join hostesses Heklina and Juanita Morel, co-hostess the indestructible Pippi Love-stocking, and Trannyshack resident house DJ Pinky Ring for the first Miss 'Shack title of the 21st Century.

Judging this year's official pageant will be veteran trannies

Peaches Christ, Nikki Star, Jordan L'Moore, and Electro the Pop and Lock King. At the door: the tasty Miss Chocolate, the Tenderloin's reigning Fish Theresa, and the sumptuous Sookie.

Witness the blinding beauty and the brutal reality! Tickets are \$12 in advance (at A Different Light and NaNa), \$15 at the doors, which open at 8:30 p.m. Showtime promptly at 10 p.m. (yeah, right). Tranny hotline: (415) 263-0980.

Enchanted rendezvous

This weekend, the Club Rendez-Vous celebrates its first anniversary with a full program of fun, food and entertainment. Starting with hors d'oeuvres and Stoli cocktails on Friday, Nov. 17, there will be a display of photos of parties and fundraisers of the past

year. The Club has raised over \$10,000 for charities like the Community Center Project, AIDS Emergency Fund, and Esther's Pantry in Portland. The past year was filled with fun events like the Mardi Gras Party, Tish Crabb's Day at the Beach, and Emperor's Night Out.

Friday night at 9 p.m., the fabulous Marlana, Empress XXV, of our sister bar in Hayes Valley, will be hosting an open show for performers who want to work that staircase! Marlana has been great to us this year, and we look forward to doing more events together

with her and the eminent Eric Weimann of the Edge in the Castro.

Continuing the celebration at Club R-V on Saturday, Nov. 18, there will be a Continental Breakfast with Yours Truly from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with food by the wonderful Dennis "Buff Buffet" Tyler. Then "Get in Here" with Ronnie Lynn (who will be performing over the anniversary weekend) with his famous Saturday afternoon Beer Bust from 2-6 p.m. That evening at 8 p.m. is our main event: Live performances by Jay Manaway and the sexy Mr. SF Gay 2000 Berlin! The show will be hosted by none other than the incredible Goddess of Red, Donna Sachet. (Yes, Lips is not the only Goddess of Red, though certainly the oldest!) Exquisite souvenir pins will be handed out to com-



Miss Trannyshack 1999
Mangela Lansbury

memorate the occasion, limited in supply and destined to become a collector's item! I almost forgot to mention the prize giveaways — every hour on the hour throughout the entire anniversary week-end!

It doesn't end there, folks! On Sunday, November 19, there is a special 49er football fete at the Rendez-Vous, with a Tailgate Thanksgiving buffet by Dennis "Turkey and Trimmings" Tyler. Our team will be taking on the Atlanta Falcons at 1:15 p.m., and although the Niners have had it rough this year, our Fan Club members continue to cheer on the games every Sunday. Later that evening, the Men of Exotica will be doing a special anniversary Male Strip Show at 6 p.m. These boys are hot! So come on down to the Club — I think I'll bring my sleeping bag and just stay there all weekend. ▼

by the six male contestants for local AIDS agencies and the Leather Archives & Museum, so the inaugural leather weekend for installing the new title was a successful endeavor with lots and lots of people to thank for participating, sponsoring and volunteering.

Shann Carr, fresh from a vacation in Puerto Vallarta, was at her best again; looking svelte and keen, she sported a dazzling tan

and some enticing outfits for all segments of the contest. Songstress Terri Foster looked chic in a tailor-made brown leather outfit with cute brown boots and that dazzling personality. It was a fun interlude.

On Sunday afternoon at around 1630, T. Jay Cain was named the first ever Mr. North Coast Leather 2001, while Sean Michael Thompson was the first runner-up. T. Jay will advance to IML in Chicago next May. The Russian River Resort (also known as the Triple R) scored again with their contestant.

Much celebrating, whooping and hollering went on for the rest of the weekend.

At my deadline, late Sunday night, there was no word about the winner of the 2001 Mr. Palm Springs Leather competition in that desert oasis — but stay tuned! You'll be the first to know when it comes out.

Notes from all over

Know that Guy Baldwin is not the manager of the new Mister S leather store in Los Angeles.

Also, be reminded that the \$95 fee for Mid-Atlantic Leather weekend in January is good only until December 1st. After that, the price goes to \$115, so get your applications in real soon.

Sad to report that the La Maison de Sade restaurant in New York was closed down by the New York ABC because one of the waitresses stuffed her panties down the throat of an undercover ABC agent. The ABC was incensed further when they discovered that said "waitress" was a man in drag! Now that's kinky!!!

Click on www.L LeatherPage.com for the latest from leather communities all over the US and Canada by leather columnists. See you next week! ▼

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Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

to vie for the title. Details are sketchy, but when all was said and done, Anna Macias emerged the winner — a very outgoing woman who should do well whether she competes at IML or at the new Ms. World Leather contests.

More than \$2,000 was raised

by the six male contestants for local AIDS agencies and the Leather Archives & Museum, so the inaugural leather weekend for installing the new title was a successful endeavor with lots and lots of people to thank for participating, sponsoring and volunteering.

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FILM

Stuffing the turkey



Director/co-writer Gurinder Chadha's new comedy *What's Cooking?*, opening Friday, visits four California kitchens on the turkey-centered holiday of Thanksgiving. Four families confront their own turkeys and each other. The family quartet includes the Los Angeles home of Herb and Ruth Seeling (Maury Chaykin, not pictured, and Lainie Kazan, center), who are welcoming home their beloved daughter Rachel (Kyra Sedgwick, right) and her wink-wink "roommate" Carla (Julianne Margulies, left). Despite their obvious lesbian relationship, Rachel and Carla must stuff it, and live a lie on this most American — read hypocritical — of holidays.

What's Cooking? also features the superior actresses Joan Chen and Mercedes Ruelh, presiding over their respective families. Opens tomorrow in Bay Area theatres. ▼

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PARTING GLANCES

JGdiking Guy On Bike Van Ness 10/6
You were riding bike across street, Van Ness, I was w/ two friends, caught each other eyes, then you crashed. Sorry I did not help. Call me. ☎ 72486

Rich Of Walnut Creek, Handsome Guy with the "wicked smile!"
We met on Castro St. Fair Sun. behind the Castro Theatre during the Sundance Salon hoodwink. You were drinking a Foster's Lager and I asked you where you got it. I would love to spend some time with you. Please call me! ☎ 72487

Alex From Cuernavaca
Powerhouse 9/30. We talked about Mexico. I have been thinking of you since. Would like to get to know you. ☎ 72488

37 Corbett Stop 9/29
You: goatee'd, short brown hair w/sunglasses. We were chatting when my colleague approached. Liked your handsome smiling face. Call! ☎ 72489

Mr. Fong, Handsome Man, Tues 9/19
We said hello thru your white car window. You said "Mike" when I asked; the phone # eluded me but I dialed anyway; your smile! Please call. ☎ 72490

Castro Cala Sat. Oct 7, 3pm
Lots of glances, smiles, small talk at checkout. Both of us Levis, older. You in front with cart. Would like to talk. ☎ 72491

18th/ Castro Thurs 10/12 10pm
You: tall, Black, handsome w/2 friends? Me: short hair blue shirt with 2 friends. We cruised shamelessly. I tried to catch up. Let's meet! ☎ 72514

Fuzio Castro Sun 10/08
Me: GWM, green plaid shirt-waited for table at the same time. You: attractive great smile & eyes-seated with book to me. Let's meet. ☎ 72515

Mon Oct 9: Seeking Asian Man
Yellow sweater, 16/Market walking for table at the same time. You: attractive great smile & eyes-seated with book to me. Let's meet. ☎ 72516

Keith- Sat 10/14
Long shot- but it would make my month to hear from you! ☎ 72517

Chuck! We Met @ Steamworks
It was my birthday. "Wow!" Please call if you'd like to get together! Really can't stop thinking about you. ☎ 72537

Handsome Gent Castro 10/14
You: Black shirt, glasses, s&p hair walking around with friend. First spotting: Different light. Second: through Tolly's window while speaking to friend. Wanted to say more than "Hi". Can we? ☎ 72538

Macy's Stonetown 10/22
You: very sexy man, customer service, wearing shorts, goatee, tattoo on right arm. Me & my husband buying watchband. We exchanged smiles & spoke briefly. Coffee? Dinner? Wanna get together? ☎ 72539

Safeway On Market 10/22 9am
You: GAM approached me & said I was handsome. You wore a Hawaiian creations sweatshirt. Me: GWM with thick moustache. Totally flattered & temporarily mute. Would like to meet & talk. ☎ 72573

Embarcadero Center 10/22 Tom
You: Tom from Richmond area, work for Big S firm in communications. Me: Tom too! You buying gift for niece. Would love to talk more. ☎ 72540

"Night Child!!!"
Incredible interaction at "Tuesday Suck" 10/10. You're amazing. I want to know more of you. We stared deeply & touched subtly but with power & intensity. Rarely have I found anyone to match me on that level, nor anyone as delightful as you. Please call. Whatever! ☎ 72541

Rick On Baker St.
Congrats on getting reunited with your darlin' cat. Enjoy our conversation over Bandit and A.J. Give a call and introduce the cats to each other. ☎ 72568

8th & Market 10/25 U-White,
Grey-bm hair, brn shirt & Khakis. Me-bl jeans & blk sweater. Walked down 8th too shy to talk, wanna meet? ☎ 72569

Aquamarine Colt
33 bus stop @ 18th/Castro, 10/12, 3pm. You: Wool-worthy dark good looks. Me: Blond, moustache, sunglasses. Rendered stupid by desire. Wanna rectify? ☎ 72570

"L" Taraval 10/14 Noonish
You: Black hair/goatee, with black bag over shoulder, black note book; green t-shirt, jeans. Me: black shorts & blue long sleeve t-shirt, sandals, left ankle bracelet, s/p hair moustache. Please call! Bernardo ☎ 72571

Lafayette/Park 10/12/10:30pm
Chris met, You: BM, only 3 wks. in SF. Me: W/ beard. We went to my place. You wanted to please me- you did, and more. Please call. ☎ 72572

Smiled Saturday Night
You are White, I am Asian. We smiled at each other while watching the cheerleaders. Would like to meet. ☎ 72574

ISO Michael 10/27 Metro
Your table was next to ours, me in blue short sleeve. As you left, you stopped and was introduced to our table with 8 people. ☎ 72593

Cute Curly Haired Dark Preppie Boy Of Wh/Indian/Med/Latin looks?
Sometimes preppie BM. We tend to see each other a lot in the Castro, B of A, me at bus stop, couple of times De tour. Why don't we just say hello for starters? ☎ 72594

Jack London Square Sunday 11/5
Barnes & Noble coffee shop @ 2:00pm. You: red hair w/calculus book. Me: worried about backwards time travel. I felt a connection, did you? Please call. ☎ 72595

Rick @ Lonestar Sat 11-4-00 PM
Shy @ the bar? How about dinner? Or a drink? No prize tickets needed! ☎ 72596

Mint Bar "Blue Shirted Flasher"
You flashed me at door, on Halloween. Me blonde, bearded vampire in white & silver. My photo didn't come out, can I get a 2nd shot? ☎ 72597

Walking Down 18th Sun 10/29
We walked past each other, me: gray shirt, jeans. You: baseball cap, blue sweatshirt, backpack. We looked back a couple of times. Hope our paths cross again. ☎ 72598

Eric In The Edge On Halloween
Uncle Sam wants you. ☎ 72599

Handsome Asian Civic Cent 10/27
Like finding a needle in a haystack. Asian gent Civic Center 10/27 approx 8pm with an incredible walk. Interested in meeting? ☎ 72600

SEEKING RELATIONSHIP

GWM 31, 5'4" ISO Funny, Caring
Professional type for LTR. ☎ 72586

HIV+ Blk 5'10", 165#
Weight & height proportionate active healthy. Seeking a middle age friend. Numbers unimportant. Physical appearance is. I prefer slim to lean build body types. ☎ 72492

Now Is The Time
Attractive healthy fit regular White guy, 5'6", 155lbs. easy going personality, professional ready for fun and romance with similar 35+-y.o. masculine GBM of medium to thick build. ☎ 72493

Quiet And Conservative
GM 34, 5'9", 155lbs. not into gay scene, drugs, or smoking. ISO of LTR with a HIV- GM under 50. Weight proportionate to height. You are honest and down to earth. ☎ 72494

Seeks Asian Male
Cute blonde student 22, gym body, cute face new 2 San Francisco. Into volleyball and cooking. 5'11", 160# smooth chest. ☎ 72495

Palo Alto GAM 42, 5'11" 190 ISO
A friend who's not buffed or well-endowed but a regular top. UB on the mid Peninsula under 50 yrs. ☎ 72496

Submissive Bottom Boy
Looking for dominant in-shape top daddy to train me for his pleasure. Daddy be 40+. Boy is 41, 145#, 5'7", GWM, tatts- waiting to serve. ☎ 72497

Seeks GWM 60 Or Over
Attractive GAM 50 professional and self employ seeks GWM for friendship possible LTR. Prefer non-smoker and clean shaven. ☎ 72498

"East Bay Black Male Wanted!"
Goodlooking WM looking to service orally. I'm 6ft, 170lbs, 35, blk, blue, stache, hairy and masculine. You should be over 35, masculine, dominant, verbal, and in-shape. ☎ 72518

Romantic & Nasty Seeking Same
37y.o. hairy Italian top. 6', 200#, br/br ISO beefy, hairy bottom. If you are romantic yet nasty call for some cuddling & raunch! ☎ 72519

High Minded Chat
GWM, 27, 6', 170, b/b, seeking committed, spiritual, intellectual, sensitive GWM, 27-36. I like Henry James, poetry, jazz, outlaws. No dots-com! Maybe we could discuss our book projects. ☎ 72520

Alla That's Alright, But...
Seeking open-hearted Black men for steady companionship sex, weekend excursions, quiet pleasures. Me: GWM, 40, tall, muscular, lean, brown/blue, goate, mostly top. Enjoy theatre, music, reading, outdoors, dance. ☎ 72521

Hot Bottom Looking 4 Asian Top
Latin, muscular, masculine 36yrs-old-158ht-160wt, u-not older 40yrs young look nice, masculine medium body. Live here in SF. I prefer Japanese, Vietnamese, or Philippino. No divas, a nice boy, boy, boy! ☎ 72522

Sr. GWM ISO Younger M.O.C.
Seeking younger Asian, Black, Hispanic, healthy, cuddly sex partner. Everything (safe) goes except penetration. All body types. I'm professional, healthy, 69y/o, 5'4", 123, trim. ☎ 72523

New Leather/Diaper Boy In Town
Cute, trim, GWM, 40, 5'9", HIV-, seeks LTR with health conscious, caring diverse daddy. Boy enjoys museums, Discovery Channel, long walks, Exploratorium, quality conversations, two-stepping, safe sex & kink. ☎ 72524

Impossible Dream?
GBM, early 50's tall, good-looking bottom wants to meet tall White top guy who is intelligent, secure, sexy and who has integrity. ☎ 72525

Young Guy Seeks Relationship
Shy young cute guy desires relationship with old gentlemen- serious only. ☎ 72575

Attractive Castro Professional
Very bright, humorous, playful, sentimental, world traveller, cook, gardener, loves to eat out, sexually versatile and hot, healthy HIV+, seeking LTR with similar man. ☎ 72542

Friends Or More
GWM 50, HIV- 6'175# looks for same, not overweights 30-60 for friends or monogamous LTR. Like smoke ND. I'll respond. ☎ 72543

Cute, Tall, 30s, Cleancut, Pos GWM 6'2", 175 brown/blue. Versatile-bottom seeking cute younger hung top boy to hang out, sleep in, cuddle, watch movies, enjoy fires, eat like kings and fuck like rabbits. ☎ 72544

Baby Bear Seeks Playmate
Me: 48, 5'9", 180lbs. baby bear build, versatile furry, clean and sober. You: versatile, mostly top, drug free, horny, well hung a plus. ☎ 72545

Life Is To Be Shared
Prof. GWM 5'10"-145# in-shape 59, thinks like 40's, looking to share a great life with person who's at ease w/himself 40+ who has style & is caring. ☎ 72546

How About Some Bump & Grind?
GBM top 50 needs GWM bottom 50ish for hot sex and hanging out at my place, must be beefy and enjoy taking it. Smoke and aroma A+. ☎ 72547

Fat Is Beautiful
GAM 50's 5'8", 125 looking for yng/old fat guy to pen-pals, exch, pic, w/possible lifetime partner. Pls reply w/your email or mailing address. ☎ 72576

The Country & The Magic Touch 1,2,3 HIV+, 45yrs, GWM, 195lbs, 6'3" tall, med build brn/gn beard bottom. Sks: top hung attractive romantic height weight proportionate male for special rel- Song "Mark Wills-Back at one" smoke open minded & spirited J.D. RWC ☎ 72577

Nice Bottom For Nice Top
GWM, 40y.o. wants to meet intelligent top for friendship and more. I am apprentice so be my sweet mentor. ☎ 72578

Asian Master/5'6", 140lbs 39yrs
Seeking young clean shaven slim to trim submissive White slave boy toy for topping, pain, pleasure, casual dating. ☎ 72579

GWM Seeks GAM For Possible LTR
GWM 30ish looks 20ish very attractive, not into clubs seeks skinny nerdy 20-30ish intelligent, intelligent GAM. Enjoy fun and romantic eyes. You won't be sorry. No heavy drinkers, drugs. ☎ 72580

Maybe LTR
Oral and active, into outdoors and cozy nights, good music. 6', 190 HIV-, over 60. Seeking oral and cuddly 45-70, for fun, maybe LTR. ☎ 72581

Need A Caring Uncle or Friend?
Sincere W/M, young 48, tall, trim, HIV negative seeks rather slim/skinny Asian, White or Latino male 18-38 for nephew, friend or lover. 18v38, dinner, out exercise, snuggling, massage. ☎ 72582

I Know You're Out There!
Handsome, healthy, HIV+, successful, 40-something, muscular guy, 5'10.5", 165lbs, who enjoys life with comic intensity. Looking for someone my age or younger for passionate relationship. ☎ 72583

Seeks Asian Male
Attractive blonde college student 24 into volleyball and kickboxing. 5'11", 160# smooth chest. Bottom ☎ 72584

Sexual Craving...
Mature male who submit to dominant male. Is obedient and eager to please. ☎ 72585

HIV+ Black Male Or Latino
Wanted by HIV+ blond/blue 5'10", 150lbs versatile bottom. 44yrs genuinely honest and loving, you be the same. I live in Paradise near Chico, am willing to travel, please call me. S 72601

Seeking Asian Boyfriend
Muscular GWM, 43. In very good shape is wishing to date a smooth, in-shape Asian. 25-50. No games or B.S. Please only serious minded long term. ☎ 72602

East Bay Latino ISO Black Male
Attractive, 35, 5'9", 160, HIV-, smooth olive skin. youthful face, healthy lifestyle. ISO Black male, masculine, in good shape, top, under 45 for dating or possible relationship. ☎ 72603

SEEKING ADVENTURE

Sensible Sadist Sought
Me: attractive, youthful-42yo, 5'10", 150lbs. dark, hairy, goatee, foreign born, cut, affectionate. Excellent kisser. You: dominant, around my age. HIV-, communicate- we both for intense intimacy. ☎ 72499

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Crazy For Blonds

Attr. Brazilian, slim and slender 36y, 5'8", 142#. Nice big uncult cock, very clean hard & horny, looking for blonds under 38 for pumping his rose pussy. 72500

"Mature Manussy Wanted!"

Uncult well-endowed BM needs experienced holes for serious plowings. No relationship, just intense ball draining pleasure. Black, oral expert, aroma, submissive are pluses. No jerks or pushy bottoms. 72501

Need Black Bubble Butt

I am a WM, 47y.o. 5'8", 135lbs. in-shape with a wild 9 inches for you. 72502

North Bay Bears

Social and play club for North of city Bears. (City Bear Welcome) call for info. 72503

Tall Attractive HIV+ GWM 45yrs

6'3", 195, brn/gm, mstch, med. hairy, romantic bottom. Sks: normal reg toman, hung+ thick, hairy+nudity ok, affection, gr8 klsser, smoke ok, no flabbies- stout ok. 72504

Dating Sucks

Busy SWM, romantic, cute, 39/6/175, athletic, HIV-neg, br/br, hairy, nice buns, 6"/cut, looking to serve attractive WM that's hung, horny, & HIV neg. Weekly at my place in SF. 72505

Sexy Partners Wanted

Very hot versatile 45yo. guy 5-8 160# wants tops, bottoms and in-between for regular sessions, also wants to put together small groups of in-shape men 25-50. Lean or muscular and safe only. 72506

Voice Sex Roleplay Dirtytalking

Bi male loves female voice, wishing sex talk and role playing on phone-from nice to naughty to nasty- your choice. Tell me all your dirty stuff secrets, confidentially. 72482

Slave Seeks Boyish Master

Me: fit 40yo- love cock worship, dog training, heavy humiliation, spanking etc. I will perform 4 you & your friend. You: young cute Asian, but not nec. 72526

Erotic Fun

White male, 53, seeks another White male, 40-60 for safe erotic fun. Prefer height between 5'11"-6'5", weight between 170-210. 72527

"Big, Hefty, Husky, Chubby, Fat!"

GBM, 5'11", 47yo, 250lbs., versatile, adventurous, seeks full-sized men with big tits, ass, legs, & thighs for sexual pleasure, must be discreet. Big men only! 72528

Tight Hairy Butt 4 Uncult Cock

34yo, 6'3", tall, muscular swimmers build, hairy chest, handsome, masculine, lt. brown hair/blue, hairy tight butt, hung 7.5", seeks uncult guys to service. 72529

Seeking Asian Or Latino Tops

Goodlooking healthy GWM, 38yrs. 6'1", 175lbs, seeks similar masculine Asian or Latino top 20-35 for safe good times. 72530

Handsome Hung Italian

Super endowed 10" seeks another HIV negative extremely well hung man for oral sex. 72531

Naked On The Toilet

Fantasy scenario: straight trim guy 43 walks and finds you on the toilet, humiliates you verbally abuses you, and makes you suck. You are trim and under 42. 72532

Gang Bang My Asshole

Caucasian, shaved, bearded bear, 49, I'm on my belly waiting for ass-fucking studs to plow my ass. Cum with other studs watching! 72533

Poz GBM Sks GWM Top

38, 165lbs, 6ft, smooth, masculine but submissive behind closed doors. Tell me how you want me to take it. 72534

Hairy Men Of Color

Hairy muscled GWM, 47, 5'8", 140, ISO muscled hairy- chested African American, Latino, Arab men for heavy pecwork, 69ing, and butt-banging, no LTR, poz, UB too. 72588

Opposites Attract

Masculine, big-dick Italian top gets hard for Inshape, small dick, bubble butt, bottom-boys, any race, under 40. 72548

Str8? Gr8!

Getting your best yet won't turn you gay! You'll live shooting your max for creative cocks sucking that won't quit. Uncult a plus. (sweat balls? licked off). 72549

Love To Suck

GWM 50 non gym 6', 190lbs loves to suck dick any race/age 7" or better. Lay back. Downtown location. 72550

Adventure Cuming Gr Tampa Fla.

GWM 37 br/bl moustache goatee 5'8", 30, HIV+ healthy butt cock. All answered. 72551

Cuddly Fit Latin Bottom

Sought by attractive, fit, healthy POZ WM, 160, 6ft, 45y.o. You're affectionate, fit, under 45. Your place a big plus for safe hot time. 72552

"Got Cheese!"

GWM 50, 6', loves man smells any age, race, 7" or more. Long over hang a real plus. 72553

I'm The Pepper, You're The Salt

Horny 47 year old East Bay top enjoys seeing a light skinned oral expert down on my big thick chocolate chest. No voicemails, papers or games please. 72554

You Never Be Disappointed!

Handsome sex great-shape beefy 30s GAM with talented deep-throat, sks HIV- thick & hung 8+ hot masculine muscular in-shape GWM/GBM for fun on a regular basis & friendship. 72555

Milkman Seeks A Good Gum-job

If you're a "tooth-less tiger" and can deep-throat a big plunger head, you might get more than you thought you would. 6', 42, 170lbs, of laid-back man. Long chewing sessions a plus! 72556

I Want To Taste Dark Meat

Bi, WM new to scene, curious to taste dark meat of older Black men (50's, 60's seniors)-clean and considerate please- no drugie or weirdos etc. Will serve you orally. 72557

Big Man For You

Hugs & kisses come first. LTR. Me: attractive oral-topman, 50, 6'5", 350lbs. You: attractive, GM, 21-40, slim. 72558

GWM 45 Looking To Meet Men

40+ for play & dating. Me 5'9" 180 med ok shape br br into feet & other oral you fun. Friendly with nice feet A+. 72559

GBM Needs A Top To Stay Warm

It's getting cold out and I need a man to keep me warm. I'm poz, 6ft, 210lbs, hairy. I'm easy going and looking for the same. 72587

Take Off Ur Shirt & Breath Deep

Muscle guys 25-35 wanted for phy.exam. His/Asian/dk hair A+. Stress test & rectal exam. Must have nice musc. chest to listen to. Masc, bit, top DR, WM 40, 6', 180. 72604

WM Needs Asian To Fuck My Face

Bi-curious WM seeks Asian to fulfill my fantasy- of your fast fucking my virgin throat concluding with my sucking your balls while you jo your load on my face. 72605

Beer Porno And BJ For Seniors.

Strip naked, kick back and enjoy a drink and porno while masculine WM sucks your cock in return for your finishing by jacking off your hot load on my face. 72606

Hot Box For Hot Shots

Attractive 40-something Latino bottom guy wants to hook up with hung top guys for regular sex encounters. Let's be buddies. 72607

Swimmer Seeks Surfer To Dive

For pearls, dine on oysters, pry tight claims. Spandex swimsuit vs. rubber wet suit. Mussels & big kanuna A+. No sponges or shipwrecks. 72608

FETISHES**Ball Players Club**

Once a month play parties for men into nuts. Call for info. 72507

Barefeet/Sheer Socks Fetish

Do you get turned on by looking at barefeet or sheer socks on business men wearing slip on shoes? Do you like the idea of touching each other's feet? 72508

Buttsniffer/EnemaMateInSanJose

GWM 32/5'7"/150# ISO bearded, blonde men btw 30-45yo. sexy, masculine, with bubblebutt, wild and loving the same: buttsniffing, give/take enemas, socks, jocks, rimming & toys. 72509

"Tickle Me!"

GWM, 6'4", 170lbs seeks full body tickling. Men of color preferred. 72510

I'll Be Your Breakfast

Hung and horny 47 year old Oakland man needs an oral expert to take care of my 5:30am hard-ons. Please, serious calls only. 72511

Slave Training

Experienced, safe leather master in Oakland ISO submissive masculine boys for service. You be fit, under 45yo & eager. 72565

CBT Action Serious Toe-To-Toe

Handball play. In-shape GWM seeks all other challengers. 72562

Body Shaving

Part or complete your limits respected free no money exchanged either way. Just enjoyment. Concord area leave message. 72560

Slender Ticklish Asian?

SWM ISO Asian man to be tied, tickled & teased. It can be slow and sensuous or wild and playful! My fingers, feathers and tongue are ready. 72535

Slave 4 Owner

This boy is a straight male slave seeking to serve as slave property. Please allow slave to serve. 72563

"Scat Motermouth!"

Skinhead wears ski-masks, derby jackets, Ben Davis- steel toe boots. Seeks cholos and scat tops to feed me. 72566

Dominant Gentle Mature Men

WM 45, 6'10lbs. ISO dominant but gentle seniors who like lots of oral action. Beards, groups, non-buffed A+. Kinky, raunch optional but no pain, s&m, gay scene. 72567

Drag Queen Threesome Interlude

H bi-male, 52, ISO drag queens got my threesome: pluses: red heads, cigar-smokers, j/o, oral, 69, discreet. 72589

Palo Alto GAM 43, 190, 5'11" Sks

Hairy chested guys under 48, 2b stroked with nipple play. UB on the Peninsula. Will drive to you. HIV- and friendly. 72592

Enjoy Expert Urinal Service

Professional toilet seeks straights, bi, HIV- tops who desire kick back efficient service from a piss and cum hungry healthy bottom man. smells a plus- no perfume accepted. 72590

Huge Nipples

Let me pull, suck, pump, and tie your fat meaty tits. I'm sexy horny and will make you crazy with pleasure and your nipples freaky big. 72591

Daytime Asshole-Eater!

Get your asshole eaten by a pro! 72561

Raunchy Freaks

Sniff your ass hole, suck your egg hanging balls. Deep pump that ass of yours. Funky brief, jockeys exchange. You: 30 to 50, slim, good looking, discreet and enjoy it wet and natural. Latino, Blacks A+. Me: BM, 39, 6'1", 175lbs. 9"cut, and a freak. Lets do this. 72564

Erotic S/M Bondage CBT TT Etc.

Cute couple, Asian/White in 30's, gym toned bodies, want to meet couples or single who interested in getting together to play. Call to discuss... 72609

Knocked Around And Bruised

And humiliated and degraded. That's what this slim healthy 58-years old needs from in-charge guy. You come and I take it and don't come. 72610

COUPLES**"Three Is Twice As Hot!"**

I'm looking for couples "into" 3-ways. Me: 45, 5'10", 150#, swimmers build, HIV-. You: 30-50, in-shape, any race or height. Leave message. 72536

Oreo Sandwich????

Gdkg, prof!, GBM in city, 38, skg friendship & fun w/ hot White couple. Me: 5'9", 175, 42c, 31w, clean-cut/shower, workout, HIV-, intelligent. Be fun and hot!! 72611

"3, 4, 5, Whatever..."


Looking to hook up in a comfortable atmosphere with a group of extremely hot muscular men. Me: Handsome GBM, 33yo, 5'11", 185, stache, clean-cut, smooth, shvd head. "Built To Perfection!" Let's Hook. 72612

OTHERS**Gym Partner Wanted-Beginner**

At Gold's on 9th, for morning workout. Let's get in shape together! 72512

Workout/Sparring Partner Wntd

5'8", 140lbs, wrestler/fighter, preparing for first pro fight in January. ISO partners to lift, wrestler, box, fight. Serious, non-sexual workouts. Let's rumble! 72513



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The diva you know

Madonna, Cyndi, Sarah, Bette, Rickie Lee, et cetera

by Gregg Shapiro

You and the rest of the record-buying public have probably already formed your own opinion of Madonna's latest album *Music* (Maverick/Warner Brothers) by now. Like her intermittent British accent in the movie *The Next Best Thing*, *Music* is both annoying and charming. The "French DJ" shtick on songs such as the title track, "Paradise (Not For Me)" and "Impressive Instant" may be news to her straight fans, but her queer fans have been there and must be wondering why she's doing that. Has the great innovator lost her innovation skills?



Jean-Baptiste Mondino

Madonna

The "teenage girl" lyrics of "I Deserve It," which aren't even worthy of Britney Spears, can be overlooked for the song's interesting musical arrangement, which includes an acoustic guitar. The William Orbit co-penned "Amazing" sounds too much like "Beautiful Stranger" not to be a less-than-amazing distraction. The album's centerpiece (and best track), "Don't Tell Me," co-written by Madonna's brother-in-law, the underrated singer/songwriter Joe Henry, is the bravest track on the disc. "What It Feels Like for a Girl" and "Gone" (co-written by Damian Le Gassick, who warmed up k.d. lang's *Invincible Summer*) are also good, and they feature guitars (!) as well. Is there an insurgent country disc in Madonna's future? If so, may I suggest that she listen to some Kelly Hogan, Sally Timms and Neko Case before taking that risky step in high-heeled, rhinestone cowboy boots.

I always thought that Cyndi Lauper, whose solo career started around the same time that Madonna's did, got a raw deal. Both women had their attention-getting gimmicks, as well as voices that eventually allowed all the flash to fall away. Lauper's voice and material, however, were far superior to Madonna's. Unfortunately, health setbacks prevented Lauper from attaining her rightful title, and Madonna snatched it and ran with it.

In the interim, an entire generation of girls (and boys) knows almost all there is to know about Madonna and her antics, while Lauper is almost forgotten. Thankfully, she has been making appearances on television and in movies (unlike Madonna, Cyndi Lauper can actually act), and releasing dance music singles. Her debut disc, 1983's *She's So Unusual* (Epic/Legacy), has just been reissued in an enhanced version (three songs from the original disc, "Money Changes Everything," "She Bop," and "All Through The Night," are included in live version

bonus tracks). Listening to it is a good reminder of Lauper's remarkable talents. Her trademark hit single "Girls Just Want To Have Fun" is just as joyous and gleeful as it was when first heard almost 20 years ago. "Time After Time" remains a timeless ballad, and her daring cover of Prince's "When U Were Mine" is still perfection.

Bright corners

When I recently interviewed Dido, I asked her if she had heard Sarah Brightman's cover of her smash hit single, "Here With Me," which is on Brightman's new album *La Luna* (Angel). Dido said that she hadn't, but she gave me the impression that she was flattered by other people's interest in recording her songs. So how does La Brightman's version stack up? I must say it's not too shabby a version. Pretty progressive, in fact. Brightman also tackles two other unexpected covers: Procul Harum's "A Whiter Shade of Pale" and Hungarian composer Reszö Seress' legendary suicide-invoking "Gloomy Sunday."

When not singing in her upper register, Brightman can be quite enjoyable, as you can hear on "Hijo de la luna/Son of the Moon," "Winter in July," and "He Doesn't See Me." When she gets all soprano on us, as she does on "La Califa," "Solo Con Te/Only with You," and "How Fair this Place," it's a bit unnerving.

You can count on Bette Midler to not ever get all "soprano" on us. For nearly 30 years, over the course of almost a dozen studio albums (and numerous soundtracks and live albums), Midler has consistently blended material that moves from tear-jerking ballads to retro reinvention to her own unique style of musical comedy. Her 1998 *Bathhouse Betty* album was one of Midler's bawdiest, but it didn't sacrifice her gift for choosing songs with which to balance the silliness (Ben Folds' "Boxing," Leonard Cohen and Jennifer Warnes' "Song Of Bernadette"). *Bette* (Warner Brothers) is Midler's most soulful album to date.

Five of the disc's 11 tracks are R&B staples, and Midler respectfully performs them with that in mind. "That's How Heartaches Are Made," "Just My Imagination (Running Away with Me)," "Love TKO," "When Your Life Was Low," and especially "Shining Star" are given reverent treatment. Elvis Costello and Burt Bacharach's "God Give Me Strength" is appropriately melodramatic, while Beth Nielsen Chapman's "Color of Roses" gets the nod as the album's four-hanky ballad. "Nobody Else but You," the theme song to Midler's sitcom *Bette*, co-written by Midler and Marc (South Park: *Bigger, Longer & Uncut*) Shaiman, sounds exactly the way a TV theme song should.

During her 1999 Miss Millen-

nium concert tour, Midler performed a gorgeous version of Patty Griffin's "Mary," which is unfortunately not included here. She does cover Griffin's "Moses," in an arrangement that sounds like it would have been right at home on Paul Simon's *Graceland*. It took a few listens to get to used to it (I highly recommend Griffin's original version on her *Living With Ghosts* album), but it grew on me enough to say that I like it. The album's biggest surprise is a full-fledged dance track called "Bless You Child," which, with the right remix, could be as big as her 1995 dance hit "To Deserve You."

Speaking of cover songs, *It's Like This* (Artemis) by Rickie Lee Jones is Ms. Jones' latest disc of material by other songwriters. This album features the most eclectic mix of cover versions that Jones has ever done. From Steely Dan's nasty "Show Biz Kids" to Charlie Chaplin's plaintive "Smile" to Hoagy Carmichael's "Up a Lazy River," the songs are indicative of Jones' distinctive musical tastes. Jones' cover of Marvin Gaye's "Trouble Man," a song that Joni Mitchell has been performing in her live shows for the past few years, is admirable, although Mitchell's version (available on Kyle Eastwood's *From There to Here* album) is far superior. (Are Jones and Mitchell still at odds?) Jones does a dead-on cover of Traffic's "Low Spark of High

Heeled Boys," but it is her exquisite rendition of the Beatles' "For No One" that is the album's high point. Joe Jackson, who plays piano on "For No One," also joins Jones for a duet on "One Hand, One Heart" from *West Side Story*.

Folk and bluegrass favorite Mollie O'Brien has also released an album of cover material. Like the Jones disc, *Things I Gave Away* (Sugar Hill) contains a Beatles cover, "You Won't See Me," done in a restrained and resigned version. Kristina Olsen's heart-rending breakup song "Practicing Walking Away" stirs up emotions, while Abby Lincoln's "Throw It Away" transforms O'Brien into a jazz vocalist par excellence. Other recommended tracks include "Train Time" and "When I've Got the Moon."

Although there are substantially fewer covers on Emmylou Harris' *Red Dirt Girl* (Nonesuch) than on her groundbreaking 1995 *Wrecking Ball* disc, the new album does bear some striking similarities. Producer Malcolm Burn (who also plays several instruments on *Red Dirt Girl*) replicates Daniel Lanois' unique sound. The album's sole cover is Patty Griffin's "One Big Love" (Griffin's getting popular), and it's wonderful. Harris performed on the final Luscious Jackson album, and LJ's Jill Cum-niff co-wrote and performs on a few songs on Harris' disc. If you liked *Wrecking Ball*, then *Red Dirt Girl* will suit you fine. ▼

Melissa Ferrick

◀ Arts cover

It was everybody else's fault. I was extremely self-centered, extremely screwed up about reality."

She confesses her alcoholism was a big part of that confusion. "I drowned myself for years sitting at the bar wondering why everybody else didn't understand what the problem was, and the problem was in my hand. As soon as I put the booze down and got sober, everything changed."

Her own label

Sober for almost four years, and having just completed a three-CD obligation to *What Are Records?* (WAR), a small independent label out of Boulder, Colorado, with the albums *Melissa + I* (1997), *Everything I Need* (1998) and *Freedom* (1999), Ferrick is once again ready to leap into the big-time fray.

She has founded her own record label, Right On Records (www.rightonrecords.com). She continues shedding the folksy girl-with-acoustic-guitar image. Drummer Brian Winton and bassist Marika Tjelios are staying with her, so she won't be going back to the single acoustic tours, at least not for a while. After the current tour, which ends Dec. 13, the trio is headed back into the studio in Albany, New York, to record an as-yet-unnamed third album on the new label, tentatively due out in March.

In the meantime, to slake the thirst of her fans who can never get enough, a live double-CD called *Skinnier and Faster Live* is being released on Nov. 22. (Copies can be ordered for \$20 at www.cd-baby.com.) The show was recorded May 18 at Ferrick's alma mater, Berklee College of Music in Boston.

A classically trained musician



M. Ferrick (pictured) on M. Etheridge: 'Melissa's a hero!'

on the trumpet and violin, Ferrick attended Berklee on a trumpet and songwriting scholarship, hanging out with the likes of Paula Cole. "I went to Berklee because Melissa Etheridge and Aimee Mann went to Berklee, and those were the two women I wanted to be like."

Comparisons abound. Dubbed "the Other Melissa" by Chastity Bono in the *Advocate*, Ferrick had trouble shaking off the label, even though she takes it as a great compliment. "Melissa's a hero!" she exclaims.

"Melissa, Ellen, k.d. lang, Ferron... these are women who've paved

the way for me to be able to do what I do."

More problematic is Ferrick's being compared to the prolific Ani DiFranco, especially since Ferrick has just put out three albums in a single year. Sometimes people dismiss her as a mere imitation.

"I think it's clear that what I do is similar [to DiFranco] in the vein that I'm a girl with a guitar who tours a lot. Outside of that, Ani's very politically involved. That's not my shtick. My shtick is more about clearing my own personal stuff up in this lifetime, staying clean, staying honest, and being in and out of love all the

time. I'm more intrigued with my friends and their souls and what's going on with them."

Suddenly there's a shriek from the hotel room. Ferrick and I turn, look through the sliding glass doors, and burst into laughter at the sight of Jen and Brian wrestling on one of the beds. "There's so much love in this group!" Ferrick laughs.

Their inner lesbian

For many fans, the highlight of the live double CD will be the remix of "Drive," which Ferrick wrote on a dare from her ex-lover Anna. It's been described by reviewers as a song sexy enough to awaken even men's and straight women's "inner lesbian." I sense that Ferrick's unspoken hope is that "Drive" could be her breakthrough hit; she wanted to make a version of the song that wasn't too long for radio play, unlike the seven-minute version on *Freedom*. The remix is three and a half minutes, and bassist Tjelios "plays a moog line on it, which is this old '80s synthesizer."

I ask Ferrick what's in her own CD player nowadays. "The new Emmylou Harris record," she says. "The new John Hiatt record. The new PJ Harvey I just bought yesterday." Other artists she's listening to are Doria Roberts, Edie Carey, Sam Shaber, Lori McKenna, Erin McKeown, Meghan Toohey, and Howie Day: East Coast artists, many of whom have shared a billing with her.

"I'm also reading a book right now called *The First Third* about this guy named Neal Cassady, who was Jack Kerouac's sidekick. I have a friend in Atlanta who is convinced I'm a lot like Neal Cassady; it's his autobiography. He's this crazy addict who was all about forward motion, constant forward motion. And I have this sense that I can't stop, that I have to keep going."

Let's hope she does. ▼

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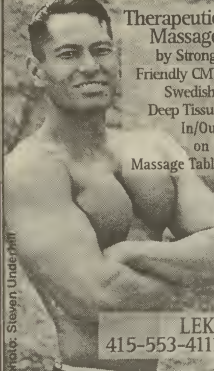
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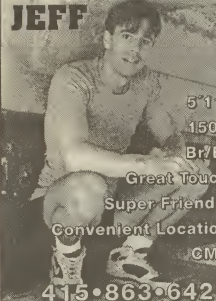
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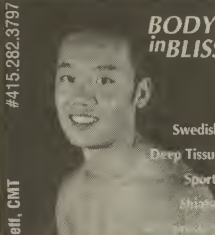
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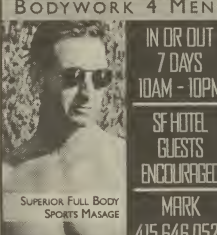


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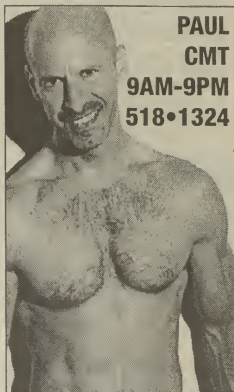
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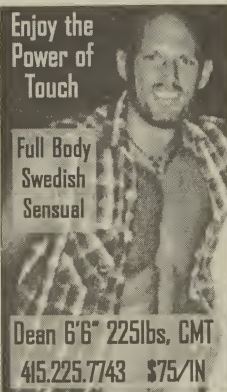
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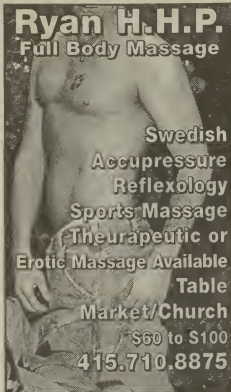
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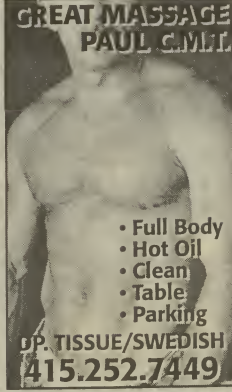
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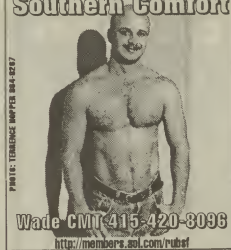
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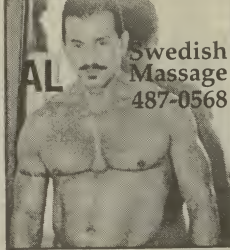
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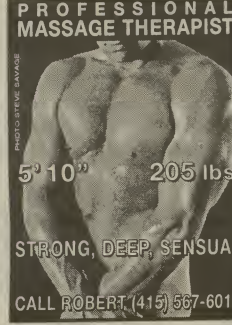
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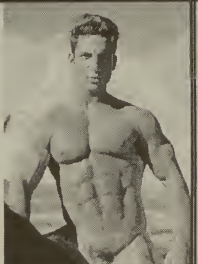
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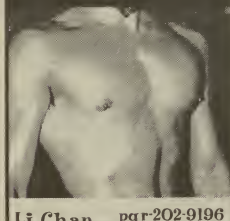
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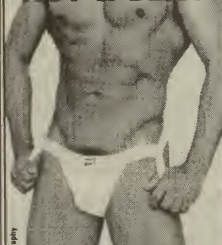
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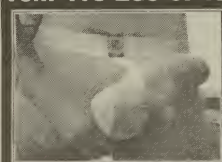
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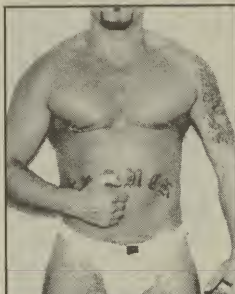
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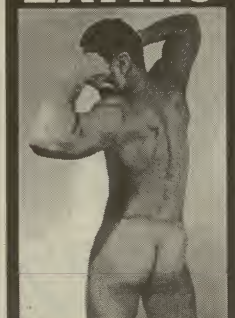
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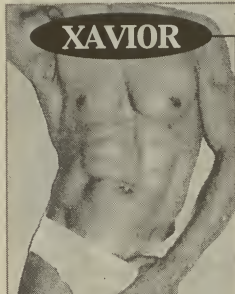
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Firmbutt for tops work out only

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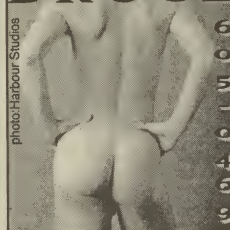
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NOON on MONDAY.
Payment must accompany ad.
No ads taken over the
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Display advertising rates
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First line, Regular 4.50
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☐ American Express

Minimum \$10 charge.

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Expiration Date

Signature

Name

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Name

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Address

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State

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Number of Issues

Classification

Amount Enclosed

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E49

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Explore your desires...TONIGHT! On
The Confidential Connection! 18+
CALL 415-247-2000
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E18

WM, well bit, 8", nds well bit men
(20-37) w/firm butt to eat. 776-7472

E51

MEET SEXY SINGLES

Connect with local singles TONIGHT
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18+ Listen & Record to personal ads!
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Bear lookin' fer party bottoms of yer
hankerin' for toys or fist up yer butt
now call 752-0971

E02-02

I'll smack your buns! 510 654-1122

E52

Gut Punchers
925-939-3519

E52

RECORDS RECORDS RECORDS
English collector in town looking to
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guaranteed more than stores. Call
James (510) 663-1730

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FDA Approved vacuum pumps/surgical,
permanent & safe. Enhance erection. Lat-
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E49

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E46

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E18

Are you hung? Horny WM, under 27?
Tall, lean, discreet Bi WM is into suck-
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E50

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FREE

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PHONE SEX

18+

MR. SF LEATHER 2001
takes place Friday, March 9, 2001 @ Club Townsend. Are you title-holder material? Check it out!

MR. SF LEATHER 2001
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Very slim Asian/W/M Lover 18-35 wanted by caring GWM 49. My web http://bobuddah.homepage.com

BRYAN L. PORTER
Sorry for what I said. Miss you. Please call home. Desperate to hear from you. Mama in NH

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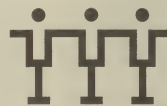
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